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SOURCES OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STATISTICS ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP

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SOURCES OF

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STATISTICS

ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP

Report prepared by Dr. Hisham Awartani, UNCTAD consultant*

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* This survey report constitutes a contribution by Dr. Hisham Awartani (An-Najah National University, West Bank) to the inter-sectoral project of the UNCTAD secretariat on "Prospects for sustained development of the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip". The opinions expressed in this study are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the secretariat of the United Nations. The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Agricultural Data Base
ARIJ	Agricultural Research Institute in Jerusalem
ATF	Arab Thought Forum
ATSQ	Administered Territories Statistics Quarterly
CBSNR	Central Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources
ETS	Economic Time Series
FAFO	Centre for International Studies of the Norwegian Labour Federation
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNP	Gross national product
HCE	Higher Council of Education
HDIP	Health Development Information Project
ICBS	Israel Central Bureau of Statistics
IDF	Israel Defence Forces
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JDOS	Jordan Department of Statistics
JIIS	Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies
JSGAS	Judea, Samaria and Gaza Area Statistics
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
PARC	Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees
PBS	Palestinian Bureau of Statistics
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PHCS	Primary Health Care Survey
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization (Palestine)
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PRC	Planning and Research Centre
RRC	Rural Research Centre
SAI	Statistical Abstract of Israel
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNSTAT	United Nations Statistical Division
WBDBP	The West Bank Data Base Project

Preface

As part of its work programme pursuant to resolution 239 (XXIII) of the Trade and Development Board and resolution 44/174 of the General Assembly, the UNCTAD secretariat initiated, in 1990/91, the preparation of an in-depth inter-sectoral project on the economy of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Part One of the project deals with a comprehensive assessment of the economic and social situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the main impediments to sustained growth and development, pressing needs, and corresponding measures for immediate action to promote recovery. Part Two of the project constitutes an in-depth analysis of prospects under different scenarios for the future development of the Palestinian economy. Part Three of the project is intended to provide both a strategy framework and policy guidelines for the revival and sustained future development of the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

For the implementation of the project, a total of 25 in-depth studies were initiated at the field level covering economic and social sectors and issues. Concurrently, and in order to facilitate the technical aspects of work on Parts Two and Three, the UNCTAD secretariat also prepared an in-depth study of a quantitative framework examining future options and prospects under several scenarios. The summary findings of the first part of the field studies, in particular an identification of pressing needs and corresponding feasible measures for immediate action, were presented for further consideration to a meeting of experts on prospects for sustained development of the Palestinian economy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, held in May 1992. The report of that meeting was published separately (UNCTAD/DSD/SEU/2). The secretariat's study of a quantitative framework for analysing future prospects was published as UNCTAD/ECDC/SEU/6.

In order to provide more detailed substantive background to the findings and recommendations of the expert group meeting, and to enable donors to further develop their programmes of assistance to the Palestinian people, the first part of a selected number of the field studies, commissioned within the scope of this project, is being published in a special study series on Palestinian economic and social development. The second and third parts of the field studies will be subsequently consolidated by the UNCTAD secretariat. The present survey (prepared in 1994 by UNCTAD consultant Dr. Hisham Awartani, An-Najah National University, Nablus, the West Bank) constitutes a comprehensive account of the different sources of economic and social statistics that have emerged in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, especially since 1967.

This survey aims at providing a comprehensive account of all sources of statistical data on the Palestinian territory. This has been motivated by the UNCTAD secretariat's own experience in research on the Palestinian economy since 1985 using different sources of data, and the corresponding need that arose to assess the scope and quality of the body of socio-economic statistics on the Palestinian territory. Such an evaluation is primarily aimed at assisting the Palestinian statistical authorities in developing their work programmes and at contributing to the establishment of a reliable and adequate statistical base on the Palestinian economy. Thus, after stock-taking of the current situation of statistics on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the survey analyzes problem areas and needs. Guidelines for action at various levels are suggested to help establish the necessary institutional basis for Palestinian socio-economic statistics.

Chapter I of the study examines Israeli sources of socio-economic data on the occupied Palestinian territory since 1967. The analysis concentrates on the extensive time series and other official statistical data produced by the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, which remained the main authoritative source of statistics on the territory until 1993. Other official and non-governmental Israeli statistical sources on the territory are also included in this review.

Chapter II examines the various non-Israeli sources of statistics on the territory, both Palestinian and international. The former includes both Palestine (PLO) and Palestinian non-governmental data sources, whose activities flourished since the 1980s as part of Palestinian initiatives to establish reliable alternative data series to those published by ICBS. This chapter also covers United Nations agencies which have compiled and published social and economic statistics on the Palestinian territory, using both primary and secondary sources. Finally, the chapter examines the most recent developments in the organization and planning of Palestinian official statistical services, in the new circumstances created by the Israel-Palestine accords of 1993 and 1994.

Chapter III presents in its first part a synthesis of the major findings of the survey with regard to the status of data gathering and processing in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Following the sequence of the previous chapters, conclusions relative to each major statistical source are dealt with separately. The second part of the chapter examines immediate prospects, through reference to the most urgent areas for action at different levels aimed at improving the quality and scope of socio-economic statistics on the Palestinian territory. Several appendices provide additional detailed information on statistical sources and on Palestinian plans and proposals for future statistical activities in the Palestinian territory.

Introduction
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STATISTICS IN THE WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP UNTIL 1967

Until 1948, the West Bank and Gaza Strip were not identified as separate regions of Palestine under the British Mandate. This meant that all statistical surveys and other socio-economic research were conducted at the national level, without reference to the border lines corresponding to those which were created at the end of the 1948 war and the subsequent armistice agreements between Israel and its neighbours.

Socio-economic data regarding Palestine during the British Mandate appeared mainly in the Statistical Abstract of Palestine, which was published by the Office of Statistics in the Mandatory Government. In addition to the Abstract, the Office conducted in 1931 a national census, the results of which were published in 1933 in a report entitled "Population of Villages, Towns, and Administrative Areas".1/ The Statistical Abstract of Palestine provides an enormous amount of information and data on the various facets of life in the country during the British Mandate. The 1937/1938 Abstract, for instance comprised 18 chapters containing 190 tables (see Appendix 1 for list of contents). The scope of data covered in the Abstract is obviously wide and comprehensive, covering both the Arab and Jewish population of Palestine. Likewise, the format of the report is very well developed, even by present-day standards.

By the end of 1949, the State of Israel had been established in most of the area of mandatory Palestine, leaving 22 per cent of its land area under Arab rule.2/ The latter part consisted of two entities, identified since then as the West Bank (of the Jordan River) and the Gaza Strip (constituted by a part of the former Gaza District). The two territories were separated at their closest by 65 kilometres of Israeli territory. Following the de facto partition of Palestine after the 1948 war under the administration of three separate States (Israel, Jordan and Egypt), socio-economic data for each area were compiled under completely separate systems and organizational structures.

Gaza Strip came under Egyptian military administration soon after the end of the 1948 war and the subsequent armistice agreement. As such, the Gaza Strip was maintained as a separate administrative, political and economic entity until June 1967, despite enjoying virtually open borders with Egypt. The administration of the Strip was entrusted to an Egyptian military governor who was assisted by a few senior officers in charge of specialized departments.

The office of the Governor in the Gaza Strip did not include a specialized statistical unit nor did it regularly collect statistical data on the area. Furthermore, it would appear that other government departments did not publish annual reports or bulletins regarding their activities as no such publications are available now to the public. The only sources of statistics on Gaza Strip during this period are the few studies published by independent researchers at the time or afterwards, including fragmented and limited statistical data or estimates.

The West Bank was merged legally and administratively into the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 1950. Notwithstanding Israeli occupation of the territory since 1967, Jordan maintained its links with the West Bank until August 1988 when it declared the "dismantling of legal and administrative links" with the West Bank. Statistics relating to the West Bank until 1967 were reported as part of the statistical output for Jordan as a whole.

The primary sources of data comprised various Ministries and specialized government institutions, most of which published their statistical output in the form of annual reports. In addition to internal use of data compiled by governmental and quasi-governmental departments in Jordan, these statistical

reports were required by law to be submitted to the Department of Statistics, which used the material as a resource base for its regular and occasional statistical bulletins.

The Jordan Department of Statistics (JDOS) was established in 1949 under law No. 24, 1950. According to the provisions of this law, JDOS was loosely affiliated to the Ministry of Economy with a marked degree of autonomy. The JDOS was recognized by the Government as the central statistical institution, reporting directly to the Prime Minister. The JDOS was based in the capital, Amman, and did not have any branch office, either in the East Bank or in the West Bank. This was not deemed necessary, since JDOS was rarely directly involved in data collection. Instead, it used to receive the data input from other specialized sources, and process it as needed in its Amman offices. The JDOS developed and expanded its range of activities at a remarkable pace during the period. By 1967, JDOS was engaged in publishing six periodical bulletins, in addition to a number of reports on censuses and specialized surveys. Some of the JDOS publications were of an aggregate scope, making no reference to specific districts. But several others provided a detailed breakdown of data which permitted extracting relevant information for West Bank districts. The following is a brief description of those publications:

The Statistical Yearbook was the main publication of JDOS since its inception. Seventeen issues had been published by 1966. The 1966 Statistical Yearbook consisted of 15 chapters, most of which also provided data at the district level (see Appendix 2 for a list of all chapters). As of 1965, External Trade Statistics was published annually, and contained detailed information on imports and exports, by commodity, country of origin, destination, total value and quantity of goods. All data were presented at the aggregate national level. However, the origin of only some major exports could until 1967 be traced to West Bank districts. The Census of Agriculture, 1953 comprised the findings of the agricultural census conducted in 1952 on a district and sub-district level, and it covered all of Jordan. The results were published in five volumes. The Census of Population and Housing, 1961, comprised the findings of the first population census conducted in Jordan at the district level. Its results were published in 12 interim reports, and later refined and condensed into three volumes embodying the final results.

All data collected by the Ministry of Agriculture were transmitted to the JDOS where they were processed, aggregated and subsequently published annually in the Statistical Yearbook. More detailed data were released in the annual reports of the Ministry. Beyond these regular releases, the Ministry of Agriculture published in 1973 a particularly significant statistical document entitled Agricultural Atlas of Jordan. This publication contained detailed data and maps on crop area and output, as well as detailed data on the population of livestock and poultry. All data were presented at the district level, and covered the periods 1961-1973 for the East Bank and 1961-1966 for the West Bank. As such, this atlas constituted the most exhaustive reference on West Bank agriculture during the last five years prior to Israeli occupation.3/

Chapter I
ISRAELI SOURCES OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA ON THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

The Israeli authorities recognized the need to develop their own database for to the newly occupied territory immediately after the end of 1967 war. Expectedly, this assignment was entrusted mainly to the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS), which has acted as Israel's official statistical agency since 1948. But ICBS was not the only Israeli institution collecting data on the Palestinian territory. A number of other Israeli government agencies kept their own specialized databases on the territory, some of which were published in regular reports, while others were kept for internal use only. This chapter is devoted to a discussion of the statistics compiled by major Israeli official and non-governmental institutions on the occupied Palestinian territory until 1994. Since then, and in the context of the implementation of Israeli-Palestinian accords, statistical activities in the Palestinian territory were gradually assumed by the Palestinian Authority (see chapter II). Accordingly, this chapter reviews, in particular, the role of the following agencies up to 1994:

- The Israel Central Bureau of Statistics
- The Bank of Israel
- The Civil Administration Department of Interior
- The Israeli Employment Service
- The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies (non-governmental)
- The West Bank Data Base Project (non-governmental)

A. The Israel Central Bureau of Statistics

1. The establishment of the database

The decision to entrust data collection in the occupied territory to the ICBS was taken few weeks after the end of hostilities in June 1967. Since then and until 1994, ICBS activities in the occupied territory became a major part of its regular duties. The organizational structure of ICBS activities relevant to the territory is worthy of close examination, as this may provide a useful insight on a number of technical attributes, in addition to providing valuable experience when planning for a Palestinian statistical infrastructure.

Data collection in the territory was overseen by Statistics Units affiliated to the Civil Administration in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. These Units were staffed by an Israeli officer and a secretary. The two Units were in turn affiliated to ICBS Division for the Judea, Samaria and Gaza areas. The Division performed the vital function of liaising between the functional departments of the Civil Administration and the Statistical Units in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The West Bank Statistical Unit had two field offices, one in Nablus and another in Ramallah, which were in charge of actual data collection. The number of workers in both offices grew by the mid-1980s to 48, but it was reduced after 1988 to 31 local staff. The Gaza Strip Statistics Unit (with only one office) had 14 staff.

Technical and logistical services relating to statistics on the occupied territory were provided by specialized departments at ICBS. This included initiating surveys, constructing appropriate questionnaires and forms, and conducting sampling processes for field surveys. After receiving the completed forms from field offices, ICBS staff entered information into computers, processed data as initially programmed, and prepared final tables for printing and publication. ICBS has asserted that in processing data from the occupied territory, the same definitions and techniques have been applied as those for Israeli data.

The first assignment entrusted to ICBS with regard to the occupied territory was to conduct a comprehensive population census. As the territory went under the authority of the Israeli army (Israel Defence Forces-IDF) after the 1967 war,

the census was conducted jointly by ICBS and IDF in September 1967. The final results of the 1967 census were published in seven volumes, five covering the West Bank, Gaza Strip and North Sinai, and two covering east Jerusalem. The latter two volumes were presented separately and not as part of the West Bank, owing to Israeli annexation of east Jerusalem in June 1967.

After completing the 1967 census, ICBS started to collect detailed data on various economic and social aspects of the occupied territory. The results were published until 1971 in the Monthly Statistics of the Administered Territories, as well as in the Statistical Abstract of Israel (SAI). As of 1971, publication of monthly data was discontinued, and replaced instead with what was called the Administered Territories Statistics Quarterly (ATSQ). Since 1984, the Quarterly was transformed into Judea, Samaria and Gaza Area Statistics (JSGAS), published once or twice a year. Together with the chapter in the annual SAI, they comprise all ICBS regular statistical output on the occupied territory. Despite some overlapping in data, the Abstract and the Quarterly each has a different focus.

In addition to these two main standard publications, ICBS has also periodically published reports dealing with specific economic or social issues, such as Projection of Population in Judea, Samaria and Gaza Area up to 2002 (special series no. 802, 1987) and National Accounts of Judea, Samaria and Gaza Area 1968-86 (special series no. 818, 1988).

2. Scope and orientation of ICBS data

The scope and orientation of statistics published by the ICBS on the occupied territory have witnessed significant changes during the past 25 years. These changes are specifically reflected in the following two publications:

(a) Statistical Abstract of Israel

As of 1968, the ICBS added a new chapter to the SAI (volume 19) devoted to the "administered territories". The contents and format of this chapter were modified until the mid-1970s when the structure of the chapter obtained a more or less established form. The 1990 issue of the SAI incorporated in its chapter on the territory some 52 tables, distributed among 18 subject areas (see Appendix 3). All the data published therein are reprinted or abstracted from tables originally published in JSGAS, often with revised estimates or updated figures initially introduced in the SAI chapter.

(b) Judea, Samaria and Gaza Area Statistics

Devoted exclusively to the occupied territory, the JSGAS provides more detailed and disaggregated data than those available in the SAI. In its earlier version (ATSQ), this publication contained regular sections on population, health, foreign trade, prices, employment, agriculture, industry, construction, transport, and judiciary. In addition to the regular sections, some issues contained appendices which reported on specific field surveys of a detailed nature.

As of 1984, ATSQ was changed to JSGAS. In addition to carrying the regular sectoral sections, the new publication also contained more detailed appendices/supplements on a number of sectors. It is these appendices which have served as the major source of socio-economic data on the occupied Palestinian territory. The following is a list of the appendices/supplements which appeared in most years. All sections mentioned below appeared in English and Hebrew, except the last two which have always been published in Hebrew only:

	JSGAS Appendix title	No. of tables
-	Survey of labour force	33
-	National accounts	14
-	Agricultural branch accounts	8
-	Olive oil presses	3
-	Financing of local authorities	36
-	Kindergartens and schools	6

3. Data collection and processing

The ICBS collected data using a wide variety of methods and techniques. Each section/Division had its own methodology and sources of information. A major source was government (or civil administration) institutions, which provided relevant input for such sections as building activities, judiciary, transport, education, health, public expenditure, financing of local authorities, traffic across the bridges, and agriculture. Some other major sections, like employment, living conditions, and trade relied on data collected by the ICBS itself, resorting to surveys designed for specific purposes. The following is a preliminary examination of the methodology and the nature of statistical output produced in four major areas, namely, population, labour force, national accounts, and agriculture.

(a) Population estimates

The ICBS estimates of the Palestinian population in the occupied territory are among the most widely quoted in socio-economic research, though their accuracy has been the subject of debate.4/ As no other source has been able to generate a documented, systematic and regular demographic series, the ICBS data on Palestinian population has become indispensable, if only as a benchmark. The ICBS data on population estimates are based on de facto presence of residents, i.e. physical presence in the area during the period under review. Estimates are computed on the basis of the frame provided by the Population Census conducted in September 1967. The results of this census are not characterized by high reliability, owing to the extraordinary circumstances under which it was conducted immediately after the war, and the impact of occupation, especially the massive movement of population. It is worth noting, on the other hand, that Israeli occupation authorities have not conducted any further census in the territory since 1967, though two such censuses were conducted in Israel itself (one in 1971 and another in 1981).

A basic flaw in the 1967 census arises from the arrangements made between the ICBS and the IDF with regard to logistics. In order to conduct the fieldwork in a certain locality, it was decided that the local military command would declare a curfew in that location. In the midst of the confusion which followed the June War, such a measure was conducive to serious loopholes in methodology and coverage. Viewed in retrospect, curfews at that time created suspicions in people's minds as to the purpose of the census. It is then conceivable that cooperation of local residents was minimal, and that some questions might have been inaccurately answered. There is no way to ascertain the margin of error ensuing from such factors at that point in time, nor the degree to which the ICBS was aware of, and able to rectify, the inherent inaccuracies. Nevertheless, the census, despite its weaknesses, remained as the only relatively reliable source for population assessments in the occupied Palestinian territory since 1967.

Annual estimates of population in the ICBS reports since 1967 were arrived at by adding births, subtracting estimates of deaths, and adding or subtracting the balance of movement of residents through border points. The number of births was based on notifications issued by district population registration offices. It is generally believed that the motivation for parents to get their newly born infants registered in the district concerned had been very strong. This measure had been imperative so that children obtained ID numbers, and thereby became legal residents, something which evidently carried considerable legal weight for

Palestinians in the occupied territory. Nevertheless, it is possible that some births were not registered, especially when the newborn babies died at home within few days after birth (though this would have affected infant mortality data but not population totals). Moreover, some families might have failed in (or delayed) registering their newborn children because of high fees, or to avoid lengthy bureaucratic procedures.

Unlike the case of births, the urge to notify family deaths is not as strong, especially in regard to infants. Recording of deaths has notably improved in recent years following new orders forbidding burials until special permits were procured from local district health departments. Owing to these deficiencies, earlier mortality data were based on estimates using demographic models which were built in the light of experience in other countries with similar demographic characteristics and development levels. These models have not been described in the ICBS reports.

The migration component in population estimates was defined as the difference between the number of residents departing and the number of residents entering, including family reunions and registration of children born abroad and brought into the territory. These figures were obtained from the Ministries of Defence and Interior. Owing to the high level of commuting between the territory and Jordan/Egypt, and the fact that many residents of the territory also spend several months every year in neighbouring Arab countries, the migration component of population is more accurately described as "the balance of population movement" (i.e. temporary, as opposed to permanent, migration).

(b) Labour force surveys

The 1967 Population Census has also been used as the sampling frame for subsequent quarterly labour force surveys undertaken by ICBS. The population frame of households has been divided into three strata, i.e. those living in towns, villages, and refugee camps. Households have been selected for enumeration using a multi-staged sampling design, whereby each household in the three strata had been equally weighted. Respondents in 5,800 West Bank households and 1,910 Gaza households have been surveyed in four quarterly surveys.

Since 1970, published estimates based on the labour force surveys have been computed using post-stratification sampling weights that attempt to correct both non-response and some of the cross-group sampling variations within strata. This procedure used adjusted sampling weights derived from external estimates of the age-sex distribution. Procedures for post-stratification have been changed from time to time, and most recently in 1985.

The labour force sample survey was implemented using rotation groups. Households to be surveyed were randomly divided into 4 rotation groups, each of which was interviewed for 2 consecutive quarters during a year, excluded for 2 consecutive quarters, and interviewed again for 2 consecutive quarters. An important shortcoming of the labour force sampling frame was that cells which had no population in 1967 were excluded from this frame until the mid-1980s. However, new cells were added in January 1987, selected mostly from rural areas and from areas on the outskirts of large towns.

The ICBS used the cluster sampling method in conducting the family survey. Despite its practical advantages, this method can lead to confusion since it overlooks the fact that members of the same families or clans tend to live in or near the same neighbourhood. While this phenomenon is particularly common in villages and refugee camps, it is also noticed, although to a lesser extent, in urban areas. Consequently, cluster sampling may result in selecting certain social strata of the community while missing some others, adding an element of bias to the overall results of the census and surveys.

The definitions used in the labour survey were reportedly the same as those used in Israeli labour force surveys. Sampling and analysing procedures were also basically the same. But there are still many weaknesses and problems which made the ICBS labour surveys in the occupied territory noticeably less reliable than those for Israel itself. One particularly important problem related to the definition of an employed person as one who "had worked at least one hour during the determinant week, in any work or gainful activity; family members who had worked in the family business or farm for more than 15 hours a week; or those who had been temporarily absent from their regular work". This definition was clearly biased in favour of an inflated estimate of employment ratios, especially since the minimum requirement for classification as employed was so low that it could include many workers who were effectively unemployed. In addition, this definition of employment did not consider the following major qualifications:

(i) The number of unemployed persons did not account for a large number of university graduates who had been forced to emigrate in search of work. As is typical of the Palestinian labour market, the vast majority of graduates were usually unable to find satisfactory employment at home. Hence, many of them were either obliged to accept employment in jobs unrelated to their field of education or leave the territory, after which they are no longer counted as part of the domestic labour force. Had the departees stayed, unemployment would have been much higher.

(ii) Similarly, Israeli employment data did not indicate occupational distribution of labour according to academic qualifications. A substantial and increasing proportion of Palestinian workers in Israel, especially in the construction sector, were graduates with academic qualifications. Such workers felt obliged to take up jobs which were not related to their educational background, though for the great majority of them this was only a temporary measure, since they were always looking for what they perceived as permanent appropriate employment.

(iii) Estimates of employment rates did not reflect the impact on domestic employment of the fact that around 40 per cent of the Palestinian labour force had been employed in the Israeli economy. The latter constituted a highly volatile labour market for Palestinian workers, as had been repeatedly demonstrated. Consequently, employment ratios had been subject to variations which were not recorded by quarterly or annual surveys. This was starkly demonstrated during periods of successive closure of the border with Israel, particularly the closures imposed since 1993.

(iv) Employment rates were inherently distorted by the unusually high number of young Palestinians who have been in jail at any given time, especially since 1987. The number of unemployed (until 1994) would increase by up to 10,000 should jailed Palestinians be taken into account.

Barring questions raised regarding the original population estimates and employment rates, the ICBS labour force data did not seem to suffer serious methodological shortcomings. In addition to using recognized and visible sampling and processing techniques, field workers reported satisfactory cooperation from sampled respondents. Consequently, published estimates had been regularly used by researchers for many years, without serious reservations, except for data relating to estimated rates of unemployment, as noted above.

Labour surveys conducted after the breakout of the Palestinian uprising met with serious obstacles, especially during the 1988-1991 period. The data collection process had been subject to numerous logistical problems which affected the reliability of collected data. According to the ICBS, labour surveys during the early years of the intifada suffered two major types of problems:5/

(i) Reaching sampled households by field workers became considerably more difficult because of curfews, strikes, and severe disruptions in transporta-

tion. These difficulties adversely affected sampling techniques and reduced the level of control and checking practised on data collection. Such problems, however, were gradually dealt with during subsequent years, as field workers managed to adapt to the new situation. This process of adjustment was facilitated by the tolerant attitude taken by the local community regarding the continued functioning of local ICBS employees, as opposed to some other categories of civil administration employees, such as policemen and tax collectors. One of the practical manifestations of this attitude was that the intifada period did not witness an increase in the rate of non-response among households successfully reached by enumerators.

(ii) The interpretation of data on the number of work days became much more difficult during the early years of the intifada, due to widespread absenteeism from work. The flow of workers to their places of work was so disrupted that it was difficult to ascertain the number of work days at any given point in time.

(c) National accounts and related economic data

National accounts estimates for the occupied Palestinian territory are probably the most widely used of all ICBS statistical output relating to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This section offers a detailed exposition of national accounts series, as based on information obtained from ICBS publications, extensive use of these series, as well as field interviews.6/

(i) Sources and methods

The sources of data and methods used in calculating Palestinian national accounts are described in relevant ICBS publications. The following is a summary of the sources for major components of the territory's national accounts:

(a) GDP is derived by summing the gross value added, at market prices, of all domestic economic sectors. GDP is also equal to the sum of expenditures on private consumption, general government consumption, gross capital formation, and net exports of goods and services.

(b) Gross national product (GNP) is derived by adding to GDP net factor income received from abroad. In this case it consists mainly of income earned by residents employed in Israel.

(c) Disposable gross national income is calculated by adding to GNP (at market prices) the net current transfers from abroad.

(d) Estimate of national income is obtained by summing the income (net product) derived from each sector.

(e) In most sectors (agriculture, industry, and construction), estimates of total income are obtained by deducting the estimated values of purchased inputs from those of output.

(ii) Scope and comprehensiveness

Palestinian national accounts, as presented in the ICBS publications, comprise estimates of gross domestic product, national disposable income, private consumption expenditure, gross domestic capital formation, and disposable private income. Estimates are presented at current prices, and then calculated on the basis of a former year as benchmark. In order to minimize the impact of seasonal variations in crop yields, changes in national account series are calculated according to a two-year moving average.

National accounts are presented separately for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, though in some publications they are combined in one set of tables. The Israeli

currency is used as a measure of value in all ICBS accounts (except recently, for balance of payments), which of course poses some problems of interpretation. In periods of sharp price rises, the calculation of the constant price estimates involves additional difficulties. In this case, certain factors have a greater effect in weighing distribution of expenditure over the entire year, using non-weighted price indices and using price indices of similar items for deflating series for which no special index was established.

(iii) Definitions and specification of variables

The ICBS national accounts for the occupied Palestinian territory are based on the definitions recommended by the standard United Nations manual, A System of National Accounts.7/ These are the same definitions used in formulating the national accounts for Israel itself. However, an examination of definitions employed by ICBS reveals some clear discrepancies with standard classification procedures. Some economic variables used in national accounts and related series on the territory are based on inaccurate definitions. This applies to both definitions of the same variables as they relate to the Israeli economy, and to other cases. No clear explanations have been published to indicate the reasons behind these discrepancies, though data collection limitations could be relevant. Three pertinent examples may be mentioned:

(a) In recent ICBS publications, imports for Gaza Strip and the West Bank include customs duties, while imports for Israel are measured net of duties;

(b) Data on the consumption of agricultural goods in Israel are based on marketed produce, while for the occupied territory they are based on estimates of the supply of agricultural goods and prices as advised by experts; and,

(c) Similarly, data on the consumption of industrial goods in Israel are calculated on the basis of: purchases and tax records; industrial production statements; foreign trade data; and regular family expenditure surveys. By contrast, figures for the occupied territory were based on estimates of average revenue per employed persons in industrial establishment and foreign trade data.

When compared with international practice and more precisely with the United Nations System of National Accounts, the categorization and definitions of some ICBS data on the territory appear unique. For example:

(a) In gross domestic product (GDP) and related series, the ICBS has treated a number of issues as under one sector (such as: trade and hotels, transport, storage, and communications; finance and business services; ownership of dwellings) to obtain a total estimate entitled "Transport, trade and other services (including ownership of dwellings), errors and omissions". Errors and omissions have been added to these sectors. This is not in line with the standard definition whereby GDP at factor cost represents the sum of factor payments, and it is a departure from the practice of separating sectoral data from statistical discrepancies.

(b) The definition of "increases in stocks" is limited to changes in the value of olive oil stocks. This has several consequences for subsequent economic analysis, not the least being that Gaza Strip has had no olive oil stocks of any significant size, and hence in terms of Gaza Strip's statistics, gross fixed domestic capital formation is the same as total gross domestic capital formation.

To these definitional problems should be added specification errors, which are misleading as to exactly what is being measured. For example, "national disposable income" as defined by the ICBS is not net of consumption of fixed capital, as is usually the case. Consequently, the income flow is systematically

over-estimated across the years. Furthermore, the ICBS has often used broad and imprecise categories for classifying variables. This approach prevents accurate assessment of the real value of these variables. This is noted in the following cases:

(a) Gross domestic capital formation in the standard system is broken down into: construction (residential, non-residential, others); land improvement; producers durable goods; breeding stocks; etc. By contrast, the ICBS gives an amorphous definition which merges these categories under two headings (buildings and machinery). Furthermore, despite the fact that expenditure on Israeli settlements is not included, the estimates for gross domestic capital formation also encompass data on infrastructure expenditure in the occupied territory by the Israeli Ministry of Housing, the Israeli Ministry of Defence, and the Jewish National Fund. Expenditures by these bodies are wholly on Israeli settlement infrastructure in the territory.

(b) The ICBS does not specify whether the factor income accruing to Palestinians employed in Israel is quoted net of taxes and/or social security contributions.

(c) According to IMF definitions, the capital account should comprise no less than nine broad components, which themselves include over 50 items. Of course, many of these are irrelevant in the case of the occupied territory given the virtual absence of a formal banking and finance sector. Nevertheless, the ICBS practice of limiting the capital account to estimates of foreign currency cash holdings of private individuals (which are mainly composed of shekels and Jordanian dinars) implies a very limited estimate of this important indicator.

(d) There is no way of estimating or establishing the net level of savings, since the level of fixed capital consumption is unknown and has never been estimated. Furthermore, the measurement of savings is limited to estimates of savings held by private individuals, and those institutional savings that exist - for instance in agricultural credit institutions - are not covered.

(e) The ICBS uses final consumption expenditure in the domestic market by resident and non-resident households and non-profit institutions (termed as "total private consumption expenditure") as a component of total domestic expenditure on GDP. By contrast, according to international convention, final consumption expenditure by resident households and non-profit institutions, which excludes the consumption by non-residents, should be used. Consequently, the ICBS has opted for a method that has systematically over-estimated total domestic expenditure, albeit by small percentage.

(iv) Methodological considerations

A number of observations are made when examining and using ICBS national accounts series for the 1968-1987 period. These apply mainly to the methods of presentation and calculation of some series, though others deal with survey and estimation methods.

(a) Internal consistency: Imports and exports that appear in the tables on "Exports, Imports, and Trade Balance" do not always correspond to the estimates presented in the tables on "Total Use of Resources", whether account is taken of taxes on imports and subsidies on exports or not. In the same way, in tables on Foreign Trade Summary in the JSGAS, exports or imports often differ from what is quoted in the more aggregate tables that appear in the SAI, and from the totals quoted in the disaggregated tables on trade by commodity groups, which appear in the same publication. There are no explanations to these differences.

(b) Changing tabulation and definitions and discontinuity of series: The statistical database of the ICBS has varied greatly over the years. Many tables appear in the SAI but not in the JSGAS, and vice-versa, while variables are adopted or dropped without any explanation. Tabulation of national accounts series has changed frequently over the years and is sometimes at variance with standard terminology. In particular, there is no exact equivalent to the ICBS's Disposable Private Income and its main component Gross National Income is no longer used. Furthermore, in most international publications, cost components of GDP are used to arrive at the Net Operating Surplus of an economy, which is not present in the data series. In addition, the sources do not give any estimates on Compensations to Employees (in national account series).

(c) Changes in currency: Compiling a 20 years series in a single currency is rendered difficult by the fact that the denomination of the Israeli currency was changed twice in that period, accompanied by its continuous depreciation against the dollar for a number of years. This creates additional problems of comparison and makes the series less smooth. The change from Israeli pounds to shekels in 1980, for example, meant that many figures for the late 1970s were rounded up, which creates problems of accuracy when recourse has to be made to variables only quoted in previous years in Israeli pounds. Similarly, the expression of late 1970s figures in new shekels carries with it a deflationary effect which reduces many estimates for the early 1970s to comparatively small values. As for the published dollar series, these have abruptly replaced some of the shekel series as of 1986, so that the latter were only available at best for the period 1968-1985, while the former only covered the post-1980 years.

(d) Data accuracy: Often, published total figures do not reflect the sum of components. These were often themselves components of other variables, and were the basis used for calculating dollar series. Although such errors occur randomly and at varying degrees of significance, they do matter when relationships and growth rates of variables are measured. Several examples may be noted:

* When recalculating the sum of the contributions of economic sectors of GDP at factor cost, the sum of percentage shares of these sectors for the West Bank after 1977 rarely add up to 100 per cent, but varied between 93 per cent and 98 per cent.
* When calculated according to published component figures, the percentage share in GNP of Gaza's GDP at market price is different: in 1977, from 73.01 per cent (published) to 70.49 per cent (re-calculated from data); in 1978, from 69.41 per cent to 71.22 per cent; in 1986, from 60.64 per cent to 57.72 per cent; and, in 1987, from 59.14 per cent to 56.82 per cent.
* Similar differences appear in published totals and computations (sums of components) of Private Fixed Capital Formation, Gross Fixed Capital Formation, and Gross Domestic Capital Formation for the West Bank in 1986 and 1987.

(e) Changing estimates and data updates: It is noted that published estimates have been changed regularly. Many estimates provided have been revised at least twice, but most commonly four or five times. In the same table, some variables for a single year have been changed between one annual publication and the next, while others were left unchanged until later. Such a practice is not totally out of line with experiences elsewhere in statistical compilation and processing. However, the revisions, which were neither notified nor explained, are published as late as six years after the initial release of estimates in some cases. This practice, which could result from data reverification, raises additional questions regarding the use of the statistical series on the territory.

* For example, total exports from the Gaza Strip to Israel for 1985 appeared in JSGAS, 1986, vol. XVI, as US$81.7 million, in JSGAS, 1987,

vol. XVII, as US$96.1 million, and in JSGAS, 1988, vol. XVIII, as US$85.2 million. Similar changes are noted in estimates for Total Use of Resources in the Gaza Strip for 1977 and for one of its components namely, Gross Domestic Capital Formation in the SAI publication of 1978, 1979, 1980, 1983 and in JSGAS 1985. The same applies to estimates for the West Bank's GDP at market prices for 1977.

For purposes of quantitative research, the irregularity of these estimates, together with the changing tabulation, currencies and the discontinuity of series implies the need to rely as little as possible on such published figures for totals, and for trying to build correct totals from the latest available corrected version of the component series.

(v) General observations

Beyond format and presentation, the reliability of estimates of Palestinian national accounts has been questioned by Palestinian and other observers. They have contended that economic data reported in the national accounts are based on biased sources, many of which may reflect the territory's political setting under occupation. In 1974, the Research Department of the Bank of Israel pointed out that: "An examination of the estimation methods used for product components such as private consumption, the product of industry and services branches, or of foreign trade, points to the use made of rough estimates, approximations and seriously deficient surveys." The Industrial Survey for example, "encompasses only about one third of industrial production in the area".8/

In 1984, the ICBS itself stated that national accounts estimates were "... partly based on incomplete series and evaluations. Consequently, the reliability of these national accounts estimates, which are based on these sources, is limited".9/ According to the ICBS, "in the absence of a developed statistical system, the estimates for some of the items are based on partial data".10/ These problems are virtually non-existent in the ICBS statistical series covering the Israeli economic and social sectors. This situation may be attributed to several factors particularly its follow-up:

(a) The methods used in collecting some of the economic data were also conducive to error. This applied, for instance, to trade between the territory and Israel, which were connected with so many routes that it was practically impossible to assess the volume of trade by conducting checks only across some major roads, as was the practice for trade data.

(b) Furthermore, the limited extent of statistical coverage of the database meant that some key indicators for the Palestinian economy remained unknown. As many variables were not surveyed or calculated, it has been difficult and sometimes impossible to arrive at even rough measures of key indicators, such as the tax burden on both individuals and industries, the real level of savings and investment or the exact composition of capital formation. These problems were further complicated since 1988 by the intifada, not only because of difficulties in data collection and processing, but also because such an important part of the Palestinian economy had become non-monetized, informal, and hence not directly observable.

(d) Agricultural statistics

The Agricultural Branch Accounts constituted another major section in statistics on the occupied territory. These were usually published on an annual basis in the "Supplements" of the JSGAS. The data in this section included the following: estimates of agricultural income; quantity and value of main crops and branches; purchased inputs; income of farmers from agriculture; population of livestock; and, cultivated area, by type of crop and district. The data on agriculture were widely used by all researchers interested in Palestinian

agriculture and have been regularly translated and disseminated in other publications, especially those of the Rural Research Centre (see Chapter II).

Data on area and output were all derived from the Department of Agriculture in the Civil Administration. Estimates were made by extension agents through direct contact with local farmers and experts, and in coordination with the staff of the Planning and Statistics Unit at the Department. No modern sampling techniques were used for ascertaining yields of various crops. However, the unusually long experience of agricultural staff and their close contacts with the farming community rendered them particularly qualified to solicit reasonably accurate data on their respective districts.

All staff involved in collecting agricultural data were Palestinians. But before they were put in final form and transmitted to ICBS, data were scrutinized by Israeli officers in the department. In some cases corrections were introduced, usually in consultation with respective local staff. In calculating values of output, prices were adjusted to the average of general prices of each year, according to the consumer price index compiled by ICBS. Population of livestock was based on the annual census conducted by the Veterinary Services Section in the Department of Agriculture.

The data on area and output are believed to be as reliable as can be expected, given the limited financial and technical resources available at the Department. Undoubtedly, the quality of estimates, especially with regard to grains, could be improved in the light of more sophisticated means of soliciting area and output data, as devised by FAO and other international institutions. In general, however, there are two major shortcomings in the agricultural data:

(i) Estimates on the size of agricultural labour force are believed to be considerably downwards biased. This is probably due to the under-estimation of the female labour force input in agriculture, which is difficult to assess in view of its pronounced seasonality and informal part-time nature. Such low estimates of the farm work force may lead to important distortions, especially with regard to productivity estimates and average farm income.

(ii) The range of data dealing with agriculture is narrow, leaving many vital indicators unmonitored. For instance, there are no data available on area of greenhouses, quantity and sources of irrigation water, relative dissemination of irrigation techniques, level and scope of mechanization, productivity trends, and direction of agricultural trade.

B. The Bank of Israel

The Bank of Israel reported on the activities of all banks operating in the occupied Palestinian territory, whether they were Israeli or local banks. The report of the Bank, entitled Annual Statistics of Israel's Banking System, provided a list of all branches of banks in the territory, in addition to a summary of banking operations presented in a combined balance sheet. The asset side of the balance sheet includes: coins and banknotes, balances with branches in Israel, credit to the public, guarantees, and other assets. The liabilities side includes deposits of the public, guarantees and other liabilities.

The annual report of the Bank of Israel covers banks in the Palestinian territory in one table which summarizes the balance sheet of all banks operating in the territory. All data on assets and liabilities are aggregated, which does not allow for identifying the performance of any specific bank. Furthermore, the said table does not specify the location of banks, whether in Palestinian cities or Israeli settlements. This makes it impossible to segregate the volume of business carried out with Palestinian clients from that with Israeli settlers. In this respect, despite the highly accurate nature of the data (compiled in the context of a well-regulated system), they are of limited usefulness for purposes of economic and/or policy analysis of Palestinian banking or monetary statistics.

C. The Department of Interior

Following the policy of linking the work of departments in the civil administration to respective Ministries in Israel, the Department of Interior in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (in conjunction with the Israeli Ministry of Interior) maintained computerized records of all residents in the territory. These records covered births, deaths, and travel across border points. On the basis of these records, the residents of the territory were issued identity cards which qualified them for residency status, unlike other inhabitants who for various reasons were not eligible for those identity cards. As Palestinian residents in the territory were careful to obtain and validate those cards, population data based on this source have been probably the most accurate available data on de facto and de iure population size.

The records of the Department of Interior on births and deaths were also made available to the ICBS, where they were used in helping to determine population estimates. Until 1994, neither ICBS nor the Department of the Interior had made available detailed series on the population of the occupied territory, which would have added considerably to the available body of information on the actual number of residents, and on their distribution by place of residence. This important statistical gap prompted Palestinian researchers to affirm that the actual size of the population might in fact be considerably higher than that reported in Israeli publications (see chapter II).

D. The West Bank Data Base Project

During much of the 1980s, the West Bank Data Base Project (WBDBP) was one of the most diverse and popular sources of statistical data and other information on the occupied Palestinian territory. WBDBP was established as an independent Israeli research institution in 1982, and it specialized exclusively in socio-economic research on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The project was directed by a former deputy mayor of Jerusalem, and was funded by philanthropic donations. Until its termination in 1990, WBDBP published a series of four survey reports (1982, 1984, 1986, 1987). The major sections in these reports, which were updated in each successive issue, included the following:

- Demographic trends
- Economic developments
- Legal and administrative developments
- Confrontations and attitudes
- Israeli settlements.

In addition to the survey reports, WBDBP also published a number of studies which dealt with specific issues or sectors. These studies were based on some forms of data collection, mostly from secondary sources, with ICBS serving as a major source. Selective but well designed field surveying and interviewing helped to supplement or clarify such published references. The WBDBP team had privileged access to some significant elements of the Israeli statistical and research establishment, thus expanding and enhancing the scope, coverage and accuracy of their publications.

The WBDBP attained, during its relatively short time span, a prominent position among researchers, journalists, and policy-makers. The annual surveys became a source of concise information on all major developments in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In general, the WBDBP reports have projected critical, thought-provoking and unconventional views of those developments. The fact that those views were expressed by respected Israeli scholars greatly added to the credibility and reputation of those publications.

The WBDBP reports have contributed tangibly to the "state of the art" as regards socio-economic research on the occupied territory. But its role as a database was more modest than originally envisaged by the founders of the project. Shortly after commencing their activities, the managers of the project

discovered that collecting comprehensive primary data about the West Bank and Gaza was beyond their means. Consequently, most data relating to economics, demography, health, industry, and construction were in effect derived from ICBS publications. The real addition of the WBDBP as a database is in those areas relating to Israeli settlement activities in the territory. The WBDBP reports contained data, plans, maps, and other information, most of which were not available previously to the general public. That has been of great help to a wide variety of users, especially those having no knowledge of Hebrew.

E. The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies

The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies (JIIS) is an independent, non-profit organization specialized in research and data collection on Jerusalem. The Institute maintains an independent identity, despite close cooperation with, and sponsorship by, the Municipality of Jerusalem. JIIS publishes a great number of research papers and reports, most of them in Hebrew. The major output of the Institute, however, is the Statistical Yearbook of Jerusalem, which is published simultaneously in English and Hebrew. The latest issue of this document (which was published in 1993) publishes data for the year 1991.

The Statistical Yearbook of Jerusalem, 1991 contains 19 chapters (see Appendix 4 for a list of titles). In pursuance of the official policy regarding Jerusalem, all statistics relating to east Jerusalem, where the Palestinian population of the city resides, are incorporated with those for west Jerusalem. However, in many sections it is possible to identify data for east Jerusalem. The following are some particularly important sections where information on east Jerusalem may be separately identified:

- Area of sub-quarters, including the old city;
- Climate (temperature, precipitation);
- Population (by population group, sub-quarter, sex and age);
- Vital statistics (live births, deaths, and natural increase);
- Internal migration (including that within the territory); and,
- Civilian labour force (total number, occupation by population group).

In addition to the Yearbook, JIIS has published a number of studies, some of which are directly related to east Jerusalem and its Palestinian inhabitants. Some of these publications contain important socio-economic data, whereas some others are rather of a political nature. The following is a list of all publications which deal specifically with east Jerusalem:

- "Arab settlement in the metropolitan area of Jerusalem";
- "Islamic Awqaf in Jerusalem 1948-1990";
- "Arab positions on Jerusalem";
- "East Jerusalem and the elections to be held in Judea, Samaria and Gaza";
- "Arab buildings outside the old city walls"; and,
- "The Arabs in Jerusalem".

The JIIS derives its data from other primary sources, as it does not have field staff of its own. The major source of data is the Municipality of Jerusalem, which has departments dealing with nearly all chapters covered by the Yearbook. Access to files maintained by governmental and non-governmental organizations is relatively easy because of the semi-official status and the established research credentials of JIIS. In addition to the Jerusalem Municipality, the Yearbook derives much of its data from ICBS.

By virtue of having access to databases maintained by nearly all governmental and other public institutions concerned with Jerusalem affairs, the data published by JIIS is considered accurate and reliable. But this applies especially to data on west Jerusalem, since information kept by government authorities on east Jerusalem is often of inferior quality when it is first collected. Many ordinary citizens and local experts have noted that information released by Palestinians living in the city to government or municipality staff might be tangibly affected by political considerations. Claims by Palestinian

researchers about political manipulation of data serve to confirm the degree
sensitivity surrounding this city which is of vital importance to both Israe
and Palestinians.

Chapter II
PALESTINIAN AND INTERNATIONAL SOURCES OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA ON THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

The need for reliable data on the various aspects of life in the territory occupied by Israel in June 1967 became increasingly evident right from the early days of occupation. This need was partly met by the various publications released by the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics. However, within a few years after the onset of occupation the ICBS output was considered inadequate in meeting the growing needs of policy-makers and researchers interested in various aspects of developments in Palestine.

Given the continuation of these shortcomings, Palestinian researchers and institutions in the occupied territory were motivated to fill what they viewed as serious gaps in the body of available data. In the 1970s, local institutions began to affirm the need for the so-called "Palestinian number", which it was assumed would be more credible and comprehensive than the ICBS output. Concrete endeavours aimed at initiating local databases began in the early 1980s, following the emergence of local universities. This had been preceded by efforts to develop interest in statistical capacities at the level of the Palestine leadership, especially outside the territory. This interest gained considerable momentum in the 1980s following substantial expansion in the number and scope of activities undertaken by Palestinian research centres. All this led to the establishment of Palestinian databases and institutions undertaking statistical activities.

This chapter reviews the work of Palestinian and other databases and statistical institutions specialized in socio-economic research on Palestinian issues. For purposes of presentation, these institutions are classified in three categories, those directly affiliated to Palestine, Palestinian non-governmental organizations, and other non-Palestinian statistical projects.

A. Palestine statistical institutions

The Palestine Liberation Organization realized almost two decades ago the significance of creating a statistical infrastructure to serve the needs of the Palestinian people and their leadership. The first initiative taken in this regard was the establishment of the Central Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources late in the 1970s. Further statistical work was initiated by Palestine later, most importantly those by its Department of Education and Department of Economic Affairs and Planning. This section reviews the nature and functions of these institutions. The recent establishment of a new Palestinian official institution, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) is discussed separately at the end of this chapter, including a preliminary view of the post-1993 Palestinian strategy for building the future Palestinian statistical infrastructure.

1. The Central Bureau for Statistics and Natural Resources

The Central Bureau for Statistics and Natural Resources (CBSNR) was established in 1978 by a decision of the Palestinian National Council. This was envisaged as a fundamental step in the efforts aimed at establishing the infrastructure of a future Palestinian state. The Bureau was based in Damascus upon its establishment, but some of its staff were stationed in Amman. The activities of CBSNR were entrusted to a member of the PLO Executive Committee who acted as the Director-General of the Bureau. The organizational structure of CBSNR comprised three units covering: demography (based in Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic), the occupied territory and its natural resources and the environment (both based in Amman, Jordan).

Despite its meagre resources and small staff, CBSNR has been able to conduct a number of studies and surveys during the past 14 years. By virtue of its

location and mandate, the main focus of the Bureau has been on Palestinian refugees residing in Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon. It is important to note, however, that its mandate has no geographic limits, as it includes Palestinians wherever they are, including in the Palestinian territory. The following is a list of its main outputs, most of which appeared as separate publications:11/

(a) The Palestinian Statistical Abstract;
(b) A demographic, economic, and social survey of Palestinian refugee camps in Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon 1982;
(c) Income and expenditure survey of families in Syrian refugee camps, 1987;
(d) A labour survey of refugee camps in Syrian Arab Republic, 1988;
(e) A demographic sample survey of Palestinians in Iraq, 1986;
(f) A sample survey of the status of Palestinian youth in Syrian refugee camps, 1990; and,
(g) A survey of productive centres of NGOs and popular Palestinian organizations in Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon, 1992.

The Palestinian Statistical Abstract was the main publication released by the CBSNR. This was originally intended to be an annual publication. However, owing to many technical and financial constraints, only five volumes of this report were published, the last one covering data until 1983. By virtue of its pan-Palestinian mandate, the Abstract was envisaged as a comprehensive reference on all Palestinian communities dwelling inside and outside the Palestinian territory. Because of the pronounced diversity of published information available on Palestinians in their respective countries of residence, there was no consistency in the information provided on each population stratum (see Appendix 5 for a list of the chapters incorporated in the last issue of the Abstract, published in 1984).

Except for field survey data on Palestinian refugee communities in Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon, CBSNR relied completely in its input on secondary sources of data solicited from statistical publications of the respective host countries. It is, therefore, clear that the quality, coverage and scope of published data vary considerably from one section to the other. Data on the occupied territory were almost exclusively reproduced from ICBS publications, though a certain amount of conversion, reformatting and recalculation was apparent in some sections. At least so far as data on the occupied territory were concerned, CBSNR publications added little, if anything, to the ICBS database.

For many years, the CBSNR benefited from the technical assistance provided in the field of statistics by UNESCWA. This was directed primarily towards support for CBSNR field surveying, sampling capacities and data processing in its local field of operations (i.e. among Palestinian communities in Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon). More recently, in the light of the new circumstances emerging after the Israel-Palestine accords of 1993, CBSNR and UNESCWA have considered the modalities of a technical programme for strengthening statistics on the Palestinian territory.12/ The preliminary proposals thus prepared envisage a comprehensive programme of statistical surveys and censuses to be conducted in the territory. These cover population, housing, social issues and economic sectors, as well as other statistical projects such as a survey of Palestinian rural communities, a geographic information system and a population "national identity number" project to assist in the establishment of a population register for administrative and development purposes. While these proposals are still at an early stage of formulation, their relevance and importance to future development efforts in the territory are such that they require careful consideration and coordination with parallel complementary statistical programmes envisaged for the territory by the Palestinian Authority (see section D below).

2. The Department of Education

The Department of Education of Palestine has published an Educational Statistical Bulletin. This report was not published annually, and only two issues have been produced so far. The last one was for 1989/1990. The Bulletin contains all data available to the Department of Education on the situation of schools and higher education of Palestinian communities in and outside the Palestinian territory. The last issue of this report comprised five chapters, each dealing with a different region, as follows: education in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (73 tables); Arab education in Israel (8 tables); education in UNRWA schools (28 tables); higher education in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (37 tables); education of Palestinian students in some Arab countries (11 tables).

All data published in the Bulletin were procured from official sources in the respective areas. As this kind of data were usually extracted from official files and reports, and not based on field studies, they were reasonably reliable. However, the scope of data included varied widely from one region to another, reflecting the divergence of types of information solicited and data collection techniques. The data on the educational situation in the occupied territory presents a mixture of data from ICBS sources and from the Council of Higher Education in the territory.

3. Palestinian Settlements Survey

This project was initiated in 1990 by Palestine and implemented by a team of statisticians and researchers based in West Bank universities. No permanent institution was set up for this purpose. The Palestinian Settlements Survey was aimed at compiling information and data on all villages and refugee camps in the West Bank. The final report of the survey, however, includes information on only 238 villages and 17 camps, distributed among eight West Bank sub-districts.

The final report published from this survey includes a tabular presentation on each village covering the following information and data:

- Administrative affiliation;
- Area in dunums;
- Number of houses;
- Distance from nearest town;
- Number of schools, by institutional affiliation;
- Number of kindergartens;
- Number of clinics, by institutional affiliation;
- Area of land by cropping pattern;
- Area of confiscated and closed land;
- Number of tractors, harvesters, olive oil presses;
- Number of mosques/churches;
- Sources of water supply;
- Source of electricity;
- Population size (refugees, non-refugees);
- Number of emigrants (June 1967-1970);
- Number of temporary emigrants (for work or study);
- Number of prisoners and detainees;
- Status of municipal council (elected, appointed); and,
- Number of Israeli settlements on the village land.

This survey was conducted as per a questionnaire which was constructed and tested before it was used in the data collection process. The actual fieldwork was carried out by a large number of college students recruited from various districts. Field workers were offered intensive training on the questionnaire used and techniques of data collection. Interviewees included local council officials and representatives of local institutions. Once the field work had been completed and questionnaires checked for incomplete or inconsistent information, the data were tabulated in their final form without any further processing.

The Palestinian Settlements Survey is one example of the proliferation of "surveys" conducted during the past few years by local and foreign bodies. As with most other similar projects, a great effort was made to ensure that this survey conformed with recognized statistical techniques. The fact that field workers were recruited from local communities helped in soliciting reasonably reliable information on most questions. However, there were many questions for which the data gathered were only a rough estimate. Also, the number of villages covered by the Palestinian Settlements Survey (238 villages) is just about half the total number of villages in the West Bank. Furthermore, urban communities were not covered, neither was Gaza Strip. Partial coverage of settlements undermines the usefulness of a survey such as this.

B. Palestinian non-governmental statistical institutions

The establishment of non-governmental organization (NGO) databases in the territory has proceeded on such a scale and so fast that it is very difficult to provide an exhaustive coverage. It was against this background that UNDP commissioned two Bir-Zeit University professors in 1992 to conduct a survey of databases. According to this survey,13/ there were 30 databases in the occupied Palestinian territory in 1991 (see Appendix 6 for a list of these databases and their location).

The UNDP survey of databases reveals some important features regarding "databases" in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. For instance, the institutions sponsoring databases are concentrated in the Jerusalem-Ramallah area (73 per cent), leaving only 27 per cent in the other parts of the occupied territory. This shows the proliferation of research and development institutions in this central part of the territory, a problem often noted by observers. The UNDP survey examined the nature and performance of local databases in regard to such attributes as declared objectives, staffing status, organizational structure, methodology of data collection and processing, techniques of data storage and publication, and financial status. The results of this survey are critical of all databases, and they are summarized as follows:

- Basic concepts of databases may not be clear in the minds of those who run them;
- None of these institutions is structured in accordance with the fundamental requirements of database operation;
- Most databases are not in fact more than one-shot surveys;
- Sampling techniques followed by local databases indicate an ignorance of basic concepts and inadequate standardization of techniques and methodologies used in the collection and processing of data;
- An evaluation of 26 sampled data institutions, based on assumptions laid down by the consultants, reveal that 15 of them are "defunct", 9 are "semi-bases", and only 2 of them are "real" bases; and,
- An alarming degree of duplication characterizes the work of local data institutions.

The UNDP survey of databases identifies many of the shortcomings and problems which handicap local data institutions in the occupied territory. Yet it is fair to remember that very few of the institutions surveyed do identify themselves as databases in the first place. The vast majority of them are institutions engaged in specific activities, whether charitable, academic, or economic. As such, their involvement in data collection is focused primarily on soliciting information related to their own activities and functions.

Drawing the line between institutions which are regarded basically as statistical bodies and those which gather data on a selective basis and in order to supplement other major functions is not always easy. This section provides an overview of databases with a socio-economic focus, as they were until 1993. Institutions are examined in sequence according to major sectoral classification (agriculture, general development, health, population, education) and not alphabetically or according to other criteria.

1. Rural Research Centre

The Rural Research Centre (RRC) was established in 1981, and was affiliated from the outset with An-Najah University in Nablus. Its initial capital needs and operational expenses (for the first four years) were donated by the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development in Kuwait. RRC was envisaged by its sponsors and founders to serve as a research and planning institution on issues relating to rural communities, and in particular those relating to agriculture.

One of the early projects undertaken by RRC was to publish a periodic statistical bulletin on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with a particular focus on agriculture. Within few months after RRC was established, it published volume I of what was called the Statistical Bulletin for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, covering data for the year 1980. Six issues of this bulletin were published since, covering the years 1981-1986. After 1986, the RRC's statistical bulletin was discontinued and was replaced in 1991 by another bulletin focusing solely on agriculture, entitled Agricultural Statistical Bulletin for the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Two issues of the bulletin have been published so far, one in 1989 and another in 1990. The Bulletin was published in Arabic and English. Its original version contained the following sections: population and labour force (38 tables); meteorology (4 tables); economy, trade, and prices (20 tables); agriculture (44 tables); municipalities and local authorities (40 tables); food balance sheet (8 tables); and education (11 tables).

All editions of the RRC Bulletin have relied exclusively on secondary sources of data, mainly those published by the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics. All tables appearing in the sections on population and labour, economics, food balance sheet, education, and local authorities are merely translations from the JSGAS or the SAI, both of which are published by ICBS. The data on cultivated area and estimated output of vegetable crops, fruit trees and field crops are obtained discretely from the local staff of the Department of Agriculture in the territory. These data are provided in tables relevant to each district. The section on exchange rates between the Jordan Dinar and the Israeli currency quotes rates on a daily basis through the year, and on a monthly and yearly average. This information is gathered from money-changers in Nablus.

As was explained earlier, the bulk of data published in RCC's statistical bulletin was obtained from ICBS publications. This being so, the technical evaluation of this kind of data was dealt with appropriately in chapter I. Acreage and output data, on the other hand, was obtained from the Departments of Agriculture in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and not through direct access to primary sources. The Department's staff have sought to estimate the area and output of each crop in the light of their extensive association with leading farmers. In the absence of alternative field techniques, this was believed to be a fairly reliable source. The data on acreage and output were published by RCC in the form in which they were obtained, i.e. before review by Israeli officials in both Departments. In most cases, the data remained the same after the process of revision, but in some cases a few changes were introduced, sometimes on objective grounds but at other times as a reflection of more subtle considerations.

The RCC Statistical Bulletin has been of considerable service to researchers and policy-makers, despite being based on limited field work. Its major contribution lies in the fact that it makes available in Arabic and English what in effect continues to be the major source of data on the occupied territory. Most of this information is already available in English, but much of it is published by ICBS only in Hebrew. In addition to the translation service, RCC has helped make the ICBS output in relation to the occupied territory available on a considerably wider scale. This service is especially useful as ICBS publications are very rarely available on the shelves of university and public libraries in the Arab world, even in the occupied territory itself.

2. Agricultural Data Base

The Agricultural Data Base (ADB) was a joint project initiated in 1990 by two Palestinian NGOs, namely the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees (PARC) and the Arab Thought Forum (ATF). The project was financed totally by European Union grant, and it commenced actual operation in March 1991. The full-time staff of the ADB project includes 8 employees, of whom 5 are field enumerators. The project was supervised by an administrative board comprising four members, two from each sponsor institution. A part-time consultant advised on statistical technicalities.

The Agricultural Data Base published five reports until January 1993, as follows (all published in English and Arabic): (a) Livestock and Poultry Survey, No. 1, 1992; (b) Population Agglomerations Survey, No. 2, 1992; (c) Agricultural Equipment and Draught Animals Survey, No. 3, 1992; (d) Directory of Agricultural Development Institutions No. 4, 1992; and (e) Greenhouses Random Sample Survey, No. 5, 1992.

All ADB surveys covered both the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It is interesting to note that data relating to the West Bank include east Jerusalem, which is not covered separately in ICBS publications, either as part of the West Bank or in publications on Israel. The field work relating to all four ADB publications mentioned above was conducted during February-June 1992. The scope of four of the ADB surveys and corresponding publications (excluding the Livestock and Poultry Survey) is summarized below.

The "population agglomerations survey" covered all towns and villages, where a questionnaire had been completed on each. One of the important features of this survey was that it provided a comprehensive list of all population agglomerations in the occupied territory. The only such list available is that which appeared in the 1967 Israeli Census. Comparisons between both lists may indicate tangible differences. The survey report provides the following information on each "agglomeration": total population; number of returnees from the Gulf; number of workers in Israel; length of internal unpaved roads; kind of local authority; number of olive presses; number of water springs; number of beehives; sources of water available for various agglomerations; sources of electricity; and number of hospitals, clinics, and health service centres.

The "Agricultural equipment and draught animals survey" provides detailed information for each agglomeration in regard to the following: number of tractors, harvesters, threshers, spraying tanks, and accessory equipment; and, number of draught animals. The "Directory of agricultural development institutions" presents concise information on 46 development institutions which are active in the field of agriculture. The list includes a number of cooperatives, district offices of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Veterinary Services, credit institutions, and extension and training centres. Each institution is described in 1-2 pages, in accordance with a list of itemized parameters. The "greenhouses random sample survey" investigated the situation of greenhouse farming in regard to the following variables: location (outside or inside municipal boundaries), period of establishment, types of crops grown, productivity, and destination markets. The total number of greenhouses is estimated at around 7000. The number of sampled greenhouses amounted to 4 per cent of the total number.

The data relevant to the first three reports (nos. 1, 2 and 3) were collected through a survey involving all population agglomerations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The survey questionnaire was constructed and field tested before it was finally adopted. All enumerators were trained in the office and in the field before actual work was commenced. Completed questionnaires were scrutinized by field coordinators before they were tabulated. After the field work was completed a random test was conducted on a sample comprising 60 agglomerations. The margin of error is reported at less than 6 per cent. Data

in report no. 4, i.e. that relating to agricultural development institutions, were also collected through a specially prepared questionnaire. The information was solicited from personnel in each institution, often at the top management level. As for the report on greenhouses (no.5), the information was collected through direct interviewing of farmers. Sampled greenhouses were randomly selected from each region on the basis of the relative number of greenhouses.

The efforts launched by the Agricultural Data Base have undoubtedly filled an important gap in the literature on certain aspects of socio-economic life in the occupied territory. Information and data on such inputs and resources as draught animals, beehives, olive presses, farm machinery, unpaved roads, and water springs are of interest to many specialized researchers. But the major contribution of ADB so far lies in estimates of population, number of returnees from the Gulf, and number of workers in Israel, where the data were seriously contested, as explained below.

(a) Population estimates

The total population in the occupied territory in 1992, according to report no. 2, was 1,499,000 in the West Bank and 758,000 in Gaza Strip. Upon comparing these estimates with those of ICBS (for the end of 1991) it is noted that those of ADB are considerably higher - by nearly 30 per cent in the West Bank and 12 per cent in Gaza Strip (see table 1).

Table 1
Palestinian population estimates
(thousands)

	ADB April 1992	ICBS Dec.1991
West Bank	1499.1	1155.6
-thereof east Jerusalem	217.8	150.0
Gaza Strip	758.0	676.1
Total	2257.1	1831.7

The higher population estimates in the ADB survey do conform to alternative estimates made by numerous experts, including some Israelis. But the way these estimates are actually obtained casts serious doubt on their precision. Enumerators had resorted simply to recording responses from village chiefs (Mukhtars) and other such local "experts", who in turn gave conjectural estimates which were not based on any clue or indicator of the type often used for this purpose (eg. number of school pupils). Estimates made by Mukhtars tend to be inherently inflated and may be in intuitive anticipation of dividends, which are often allocated in proportion to size. This is especially true in the West Bank where the number of agglomerations is so large and spread out that it is difficult to test and scrutinize estimates made for each agglomeration. Consequently, it is possible that some estimates were grossly inaccurate.

The ADB population estimate for Gaza, on the other hand, seems to be more accurate than that of the West Bank. This is confirmed by comparing with estimates formulated by other informed sources, such as UNRWA. Furthermore, the discrepancy with ICBS data is such that it could be accounted for by definitional or other limitations.

(b) Number of workers in Israel

The number of Palestinian workers employed in Israel, as reported by ADB, seems also to be noticeably inflated, especially that of the West Bank. The figure of workers in early 1992 (around 129,000) is 131 per cent higher than that reported by ICBS for 1991 (see table 2).

Table 2
Number of workers in Israel
(thousands)

	ADB (early 1992)	ICBS (1991)
West Bank	149.0	55.9
Thereof from Jerusalem	36.8	..
Gaza Strip	40.5	41.8
Total	189.5	97.7

The wide gap between ADB and ICBS estimates is attributed mainly to the casual way estimates are often made by village leaders. But there were other reasons as well, in particular:

- ADB estimates include workers from east Jerusalem, whereas ICBS data make no reference to this part of the West Bank;
- In addition to registered workers, ADB estimates include non-registered and non-regular workers, as well as those working in Israeli settlements. ICBS labour data do also account for non-registered and non-regular workers, but they do not include those working in Israeli settlements.

(c) Returnees from the Gulf

The total number of returnees from the Gulf, by the first half of 1992, was reported at 27,400 residents (23,981 from the West Bank and 3,380 from Gaza Strip). The influx of returnees later declined tangibly in comparison to the second half of 1991. ADB's estimates on the number of returnees seem to be considerably lower than figures put forth by other sources, most importantly the Committee for Gulf Returnees. Under-estimation in this case seems to arise from asking respondents, most probably the Mukhtars or their equivalent, to count returnees in their respective communities. It is very likely that their account of returnees is only partial.

3. Agricultural Research Institute in Jerusalem

The Agricultural Research Institute in Jerusalem (ARIJ) is a non-profit local institution registered in Jerusalem but based in Bethlehem. ARIJ has attempted to fill the vacuum created by the nearly total collapse of agricultural research services in the wake of Israeli occupation. It is supported by a number of European and Canadian NGOs. As is the case with most local development institutions, ARIJ was aware of the current problems and shortcomings encountered in regard to socio-economic data in the occupied Palestinian territory. In response to their own needs and those of other local researchers, ARIJ initiated a specialized database relating to agriculture and water resources. The database was entrusted to a unit set up for this purpose under the name of the Agricultural Resource Centre (ARC).

ARIJ defined the following areas of data collection as part of the ARC scope of work:

- Areas and production;
- Weather data;
- Varieties of cereals, legumes, and fruit trees;
- Economic feasibility of plantations;
- Water data;
- Agricultural practices;
- Agricultural institutions;
- Livestock production.

In addition to local data collection, ARC has begun to build an international information base which comprises books and journals as well as access to information bases such as Agris, Agrostat, Bionet, Biosis, etc. Unlike other local databases, ARIJ has not yet produced any of its data input in the form of publicly available bulletins. The computer network at ARIJ is now fully operational and offers services both to local institutions and individual professionals, accessible through modem connection.

ARIJ administration maintains a marked degree of discretion regarding methods and techniques used in data collection. However, the following techniques have been identified:

- Aerial photography is presumably the major source of information on patterns of land use;
- Output data is collected from extension staff and leading farmers;
- Weather data are procured through a subscription to the Meterological Service in Israel.

No evaluation can be conducted on the role assumed by ARIJ as a specialized agricultural database, since its data is not yet published in any form. Evaluation is further obstructed by the lack of adequate information on methodology used in relation to the various aspects of the collection process. On the whole, it is clear that the role of ARIJ in data collection seems to be targeted primarily towards serving the research and related needs of the said institution itself. Under its present operational structure ARIJ cannot be identified as a full-fledged database.

4. The Arab Thought Forum

The Arab Thought Forum (ATF), one of the first Palestinian development research NGOs, has sponsored a statistical survey of population and labour force in Gaza Strip. The report on this survey was published by the Arab Thought Forum in October 1990 under the title Population and Labour Force in Gaza Strip. Like most other data projects in the occupied territory, this project was rationalized on account of mistrust of data published by the ICBS. Hence, it was targeted to test the validity of ICBS data on Gaza in regard to two major areas, population size and labour force characteristics. As such, this exercise was not intended to serve as an alternative source of data for the ICBS, at least for the foreseeable future.

The ATF survey is based on a sample study covering households living in all four major types of localities, i.e. towns, villages, refugee camps, and those dwelling outside the former types of localities. Sampling was carried out on a random basis from all four strata. The total size of the sample was 700 households, which amounts to 0.87 per cent of the total number of households. The actual selection of the sampled household was carried out by the enumerators themselves, in accordance with pre-defined techniques. Enumerators conducted the interviews with family members aged 16 and over. Collected questionnaires were checked for consistency and missing information, and then coded and entered into the computer. After being subjected to logic checks, the data was processed using a FORTRAN program developed for this purpose.

The ATF report contains 27 tables, 22 of which deal with population and labour. For the purpose of facilitating comparisons, all major tables are structured in line with those in the ICBS reports. Despite differences in methodology, the results in the ATF report are not in most cases substantially different from those of ICBS. However, some notable divergencies are apparent:

(a) Population at the end of 1990 was estimated at 776,800, as compared to 676,100 in the SAI (i.e. 15 per cent higher). The difference is attributed to a higher estimate of births and lower estimate of mortality than assumed in ICBS series. The credibility of these estimates cannot be judged, as no sources are cited for these alternative estimates. The migration balance in

the ATF survey, on the other hand, was quoted from ICBS. Likewise, the ATF estimate for the initial size of population was also based on the ICBS Census of 1967.

(b) A major difference between the ATF study and ICBS data is that relating to unemployment rates. The total number of unemployed workers in the ATF survey was estimated at 39,000, i.e. 26.2 per cent of the labour force. The corresponding figures for ICBS were considerably lower, reportedly 2,500 workers or 2.5 per cent of the labour force. It is worth noting that the ATF study used the same definitions for employment and unemployment as those used by ICBS in its publications on the occupied territory. In both cases, a person was classified as employed if he/she had worked for a minimum of one hour during the previous week, whether for pay or profit. This discrepancy may, however, arise from the divergence in population and labour force estimates between ATF and ICBS. In addition, the different periods spanned by each set of data and the corresponding fluctuations in the numbers of Palestinians working in Israel during those periods, may account for the different estimates.

(c) The age group of nine years of age and below is estimated to comprise 47.1 per cent of total population, as against 50 per cent in ICBS estimates.

(d) Total number of employed persons is noticeably higher than that of ICBS (109,600 vs. 95,700). The larger population and labour force estimates of ATF data may account for this difference.

(e) Percentage of workers in agriculture is much lower than that of ICBS (9.1 per cent vs. 18.4 per cent), whereas it is noticeably higher in regard to industry (17.2 per cent vs. 13.5 per cent). No explanation is given for these differences.

(f) Number of female workers is noticeably higher (7,250 vs. 3,000).

The ATF team obviously put in a considerable effort in conducting its survey under unusually inhibitive circumstances and severe financial and technical limitations. The high pitch of the intifada confrontations during the time of the field survey was also an important obstacle. Viewed in the light of all these constraints and obstacles, the ATF survey was certainly a notable achievement. Nevertheless, the pilot nature of this project has had important consequences, especially at the methodological level:

(a) The methodology of the survey was inadequately described and rationalized. No mention is made of the number of interviewers, nor of their educational level or amount of training they received. No copy of the questionnaire is published.

(b) The field survey is supposed to have concentrated on living standards of the population, whereas the report was devoid of any reference to indicators on that subject.

(c) Although the survey was originally intended to test the reliability of the ICBS data, the research methods took for granted some of the fundamental quantitative criteria proposed by ICBS. A more revealing evaluation of the ICBS data would have required a thorough examination of all such assumptions.

(d) There are other technical and formatting errors in the published report, most of which might have been avoided had the study been conducted in a more rigorous and institutional context.

5. The Health Development Information Project

Health-related data have been of particular interest to researchers and aid donors in and outside the Palestinian territory. Not surprisingly, there has been an unusually high demand on health related data and information. This section and the next contain a brief exposition of the two major non-governmental data bases. Data relating to government health services are published in the annual report of the Department of Health in the Civil Administration and in the SAI.

The Health Development Information Project (HDIP) is registered as a non-profit institution, based in Ramallah. It is specifically intended as a comprehensive health database specialized in the occupied Palestinian territory. The HDIP project is sponsored jointly by the Palestinian Medical Relief Committees and the World Health Organization. HDIP has engaged in two major projects, a rural primary health care survey (PHCS), and an annotated bibliography of medical literature relating to health and health services.

The PHCS was intended to provide basic background information about health care services and facilities in rural areas. Detailed information is collected on each rural community and refugee camp in the respective area. The following is a list of the most important information collected on each local community:

- Population, number of refugees;
- Piped water supply, garbage disposal, electricity supply;
- Number of clinics and their distribution by type and sponsor;
- Population with government insurance;
- Number of pharmacies, doctors and midwives;
- Vaccination services.

HDIP has published four reports so far relating to the PHCS, covering Jenin Area, Tulkarem, Ramallah, and Nablus and Jordan Valley.

The annotated bibliography project is aimed at compiling a list of published scientific reports on health and health services in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The second edition of this report, entitled Health in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip - An Annotated Bibliography, listed 160 publications.

By focusing on health-related information and not on health services, HDIP has evidently embarked on a critically important aspect of the health sector which has been identified for long as a high priority. The clarity of objectives and visibility of methodology and reporting system have helped make of HDIP a reliable source of information on health institutions and services in the occupied territory.

6. Planning and Research Centre

The Planning and Research Centre (PRC) is another institution which has undertaken to provide data and conduct research, mainly in relation to health-related issues. One of the most important publications of PRC is the Palestinian Population Handbook. Part I of this Handbook, which focused on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, was published in April 1993.

The PRC population handbook is meant to constitute an authoritative reference on Palestinian demographic issues, especially in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Specifically, the handbook is aimed at projecting the size of population and demographic characteristics up until the year 2012. This process was intended to be based on demographic assumptions different from those used by ICBS. Another major objective was the "updating of population estimates of a comprehensive list of localities (villages, towns and refugee camps)".

The major underlying rationale for the PRC population database is the reiterated claim that the ICBS estimates are of very low reliability and are subject to manipulation. For numerous reasons, the PRC Handbook has only partly succeeded in employing better methodology than that of ICBS.

One of the primary assumptions for the PRC study is that the base population was taken to be that of the West Bank Data Base Project (WBDBP), which was reported in the West Bank and Gaza Atlas (see chapter I). The WBDBP estimate for 1987 is about 15 per cent higher than that of ICBS for the same year. However, as the WBDBP figure is also based on estimates and statistical models which are not discussed or substantiated in the original reference, it is difficult to assume that these estimates are more reliable than those of the ICBS. This also applies to the regional distribution of population, which constitutes a major

part of the PRC report. Estimates were made for 1992, based on WBDBP estimates for 1987. The methodology for that estimate is not adequately described and justified.

In criticizing many of the ICBS assumptions regarding the demographic characteristics of the Palestinian population, the PRC study team has made its own assumptions, which are in general appreciably different from those of ICBS. However, no evidence has been produced to substantiate the relevance of PRC assumptions. The only alternative field evidence, which appears to support the PRC assumptions, was that emanating from two extensive surveys conducted by FAFO and UNICEF, which were not available to PRC researchers at the time they completed their report.

7. The Higher Council of Education

The Higher Council of Education (HCE) was set up in 1977 and it has since assumed a major role as a coordinating body between Palestinian universities and junior colleges in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A main function the Council has managed to perform with noted success is in the area of data collection and publication.

The HCE collects statistics on all Palestinian universities and community colleges in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Until 1990, this process covered six universities and 20 community colleges. One more university was established in Gaza in 1992, under the name of Al-Azhar. The HCE publishes an annual report on all member institutions. This publication is entitled The Statistical Handbook on Palestinian Universities and Colleges. The last issue available is that of 1989-1990. The following universities are covered in the last published report: Bir-Zeit University; Bethlehem University; The Islamic University-Gaza; Hebron University; and, Jerusalem University, which is a loose agglomerate of four independent colleges (Abu Dis College for Science and Technology, The Arab College for Medical Professions, The College of Sharia', and, The College of Arts for Women).

Data and information is collected on a questionnaire distributed by the Council to all member institutions. The information in the statistical report includes the following tables for each university:

- Colleges, departments, and specializations;
- Number of students by sex, year of study, and district of origin;
- Number of faculty by degree, sex, and specialization;
- Student/faculty ratio, by college and level of degree;
- Number of graduates, by specialization and sex;
- Total number of workers, full-time and part-time;
- Faculty studying abroad, by specialization and sex; and,
- University libraries: number of books, leaflets, periodicals, manuscripts, tapes, and slides.

The annual report of the HCE has emerged as the "official" reference on all statistics relating to universities in the occupied territory. No other institution or university has attempted replicating the kind of work being done by the Council. Furthermore, it is noticed that all universities and communities in the territory have displayed an especially cooperative attitude with the HCE. One important reason for this cooperation, it seems, is that the Council has become during the past decade the major recognized conduit for channelling budgetary aid to its members. One drawback with the annual statistical report of the HCE is that it is published only in Arabic. This is attributed to technical constraints which could be dealt with in the future.

C. Other sources of socio-economic data

In addition to the previously mentioned databases, several other organizations are engaged in forms of socio-economic data compilation and monitoring. The following are some of the best known:

1. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

The United Nations and Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) is the source for all statistics related to registered Palestinian refugees. UNRWA publishes a statistical quarterly entitled UNRWA Registration Statistical Bulletin. The last available issue of this publication (first quarter 1993) contains data on the following indicators: total registered refugees (by host country); registered refugees in special hardships; total registered camp population; registered camp population (Gaza, Jordan, West Bank, Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic); movement of total registered population; and family size statistics.

UNRWA statistics on refugees are certainly the most authentic on this stratum of the Palestinian society. Data is in most cases extracted from the files of UNRWA's field offices in host countries. Even though an increasing part of the refugee population resides outside refugee camps, UNRWA still maintains comprehensive records on all refugees. This process is made easy in the light of prompt notification of all changes in the family size or location of residence to respective district offices.

2. UNCTAD - Economic Time Series (ETS) data bank on the occupied Palestinian territory

The database was established in the UNCTAD secretariat in 1991 for two main purposes:

(i) to establish an adequate basis to meet the quantitative requirements of the secretariat's inter-sectoral project on the Palestinian economy;

(ii) to obtain a consistent and comprehensive set of statistical series on the occupied territory that could be published as a consolidated document and/or integrated into UNCTAD statistical publications.

Prior to the establishment of this database, no statistical series on the Palestinian economy had been computerized in this manner. Certainly, virtually no statistical series was available from international organizations or other sources available to UNCTAD, except those issued by ICBS.

The data bank contains 1,839 series, allocated in the following manner: Gaza Strip, 608; the West Bank, 613; and, the occupied territory (i.e. Gaza Strip plus the West Bank), 613; east Jerusalem, 5. Topics covered are: demography, labour and employment, national accounts, foreign trade, balance of payments, exchange rates and price indexes. The economic time series (ETS) are available in current new Israeli shekels and current United States dollars as well as a partial series in constant prices. In most cases, the series cover the period 1968 to 1987.

The database relies almost exclusively on data published by the ICBS. However, a good part of the database differs from the original published data in two ways. Firstly, shortcomings in the original data made it necessary to recalculate many series, following standard procedures and bringing them in line with UNCTAD (ETS) standards. Secondly, economic data were published by the ICBS in a scattered manner, leaving data for the same variable in at least three different currencies/denominations. These and other points have been adjusted in the ETS version.

As data is stored in ETS, it is only accessible in printed or tabular form when used in conjunction with in-house mainframe statistical and tabulating programmes. Thus, it is not immediately available for down-loading to word-processing programmes, graphic packages, or spreadsheets. In other words, short

of transferring the whole database to another software system and reformatting it, use of the data is only practical in IBM-based systems accessed through the International Computing Centre in Geneva. Though access is restricted to the UNCTAD secretariat, PC versions of some of the series have been produced for official users, upon request.

The database so established has been used by the secretariat in the preparation of:

(a) The quantitative framework for the intersectoral project on prospects for sustained development of the Palestinian economy;14/

(b) An internal document containing over 120 statistical tables used by researchers associated with the intersectoral project; and,

(c) Two UNCTAD publications comprising the most important official statistical series on the Palestinian economy.15/

3. The Norwegian Labour Federation Project

The Centre for International Studies of the Norwegian Labour Federation (FAFO) initiated in 1989 a comprehensive survey of living conditions in the occupied territory (including east Jerusalem). The project was supported financially and technically by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ford Foundation.

The FAFO survey was launched after extensive consultations with local academics, political leaders, and NGO staff. The sponsors of the project believed that, viewed in the modern comprehensive sense, living conditions in the territory had not been adequately ascertained and monitored during the occupation period. In addition to the conventional indicators pertaining to individual welfare, living conditions have to take account of other indicators such as: degree of equality in income distribution, equality of opportunity, and the extent to which people participate in social, political and economic decision-making. Specifically, the objectives of the FAFO survey were identified as follows:

(a) Contribute a set of needed, comprehensive and reliable statistical information on the occupied territory;

(b) Assist governments and international organizations in designing appropriate development and humanitarian aid programmes to the region; and,

(c) Assist Palestinians in planning and measuring the course of their own social and economic development.

The results of the survey are presented in a book entitled Palestinian Society in Gaza, West Bank and Arab Jerusalem, A Survey of Living Conditions (see Appendix 7 for a list of chapter titles and other details of the survey). The survey was conducted in three stages. Stage I consisted of a preliminary investigation which was completed in July 1990. During this stage it was decided to include the following indicators in the full survey:

- Household composition and demographics;
- Housing conditions and amenities;
- Education;
- Employment and work force;
- Sources of income;
- Capital goods, consumer durable, and expenditures;
- Savings and indebtedness;
- Culture and leisure activities;
- Health and psychological welfare;
- Children and injury;
- Political, religious, and social attitudes;
- Travel and mobility;
- Gender relations;
- Women's work load and types of work;
- Women's control over resources and decision making;

- Women's attitudes to constraints and conventions;
- Family planning; and,
- Birth background.

Stage II constituted a pilot survey of 300 households in the Gaza Strip. The process that was followed consisted of building a local research organization, developing the questionnaire, designing sampling procedures, and recruiting and training a Palestinian supervisory and field staff. On the basis of the results of the pilot study, the questionnaire was modified, the sampling design was refined, and all other technical and logistical steps were revised.

Stage III comprised the main survey of 1,000 households in the Gaza Strip, 1,000 in the West Bank and 500 in east Jerusalem. The entire sampling process is described at length in the appendix of the FAFO publication. The total size of the sample covered 2,500 households (including interviews with 2,500 household heads as well as separate interviews with 1,250 women). The sample was distributed among the three regions in accordance with the relative size of their population. Accordingly, the respective share of each region was as follows: 42 per cent for the West Bank, 20 per cent for east Jerusalem, 42 per cent for the Gaza Strip.

The FAFO survey results were only recently released; they are so detailed and comprehensive that it will take some time before they are thoroughly evaluated. However, it is already clear that the outcome of the survey project is a unique addition to the literature on the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in terms of its geographic coverage, visibility, professional methodology, sample size, quality of sampling techniques, and the level of technical expertise mobilized.

Despite its distinctive quality and great amount of data collected from primary sources, the FAFO survey cannot really be considered a full-fledged statistical database. So far, the FAFO survey is again a one-time effort which has fulfilled its targeted objectives. Consequently, the survey is in effect closer to being a comprehensive socio-economic study rather than a conventional database. It is important to note in this connection that the FAFO survey contains a wealth of information which is not easy to assimilate in a short time. The imminent danger, however, is that similar studies may be initiated even before the FAFO report is given enough time to be assimilated by the academic and professional communities, inside and outside the Palestinian territory. To avoid any such possibility, the relevant organization(s) of the nascent Palestinian Authority should take all necessary measures regarding this important exercise.

D. The Palestinian Bureau of Statistics

The Palestinian Bureau of Statistics (PBS) was conceived as the latest, and the most far-reaching initiative by Palestine in the field of statistics. PBS was established as a non-governmental organization in the middle of 1993, and commenced operations late in that year. Shortly after its establishment, PBS grew rapidly in staff and facilities, and opened a branch office in Ramallah and another in the Gaza Strip. By June 1994, the staff of PBS had already increased to 35, with plans to double the number during the remaining part of 1994.

The activities of PBS gained considerable momentum during 1994. A statistical law was formulated and redrafted a number of times as part of an intensive consultation process (see Appendix 8 for the final text of the proposed law). PBS also embarked on a number of ambitious statistical projects (see Appendix 9 for a list of PBS projects as of May 1994). Useful indicators of the background and anticipated functions of the newly established PBS are found in a brochure it published in January 1994 (see Appendix 10 for the full text). The first PBS publications appeared in late 1994 and early 1995, which constitute initial assessments of demographic and economic data on the territory. 16/ In

order to rationalize Palestinian statistical activities and prevent duplication, a coordination arrangement was concluded with CBSNR (in Damascus and Amman) in late 1994. Early in 1995, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) decreed that PBS should be transformed into the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS).17/ A Master Plan for Palestine official statistics has been prepared and approved by the PNA.18/ The following review focuses on the programmes and documents of PBS until 1994, without reference to the implications of the most recent decree and the details of the Master Plan.

It is too early to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the work accomplished by PBS (hereafter referred to as PCBS). However, it is useful to reflect on the main features of the recent developments, especially as they are envisaged in the above-mentioned founding document, and as they emerge in the proposed statistical law. The following preliminary observations are aimed at enhancing the eventual role and performance of this vital national institution.

Given the arbitrary nature and limited usefulness of databases in Palestine (as described above), the establishment of a national Central Bureau of Statistics, as envisaged in the draft law, is certainly a high priority. The PCBS founding document and the draft statistical law emphasize the need for producing high-quality output, and coordinating efforts and activities with other institutions. This is a role that requires careful and balanced consideration in the light of circumstances affecting institutional development in the Palestinian territory.

In Article 3 of the proposed law, no direct reference is made to the geographic mandate of the statistical system to be established by the law. Instead, reference is made to serving "the Palestinian authorities" and "Palestinian citizenry". This formulation, which may be understood as referring to the areas and population of Gaza Strip and the West Bank intended to fall under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority, partially reflects the policy framework emerging since the Declaration of Principles between Israel and Palestine and political uncertainty concerning final status issues, the disposition of which remains to be decided. Yet it is important that the geographic mandate of the central Palestinian statistical infrastructure includes all countries where Palestinians exist at large, as clearly identifiable communities. While this might be beyond the immediate scope of operations of PCBS, both its operations and the application of the proposed law should envisage the future role for institutions such as CBSNR.

The law confers broad authority to the PCBS and its Director-General on all issues relating to official data collection and publication in the Palestinian territory. In particular, Article 8 controls the statistical collection activities of government departments, while Article 9 designates the PCBS as the only authority empowered by law to request data for official statistics from public and private institutions. The latter provision, which is a much less restrictive formulation than in preceding draft versions of the Law, leaves some room for individuals and private or official institutions to collect statistical data, though without any legal power to enforce compliance. This appears to strike a reasonable balance between PCBS official functions and the legitimate research activities of individuals and private or public agencies.

The proposed law does not allow for any systematic way to scrutinize, amend or evaluate the plans and decisions made by the PCBS or its Director-General. There is no reference to a Board of Directors; instead an Advisory Council is envisaged (Article 6). The said article emphasizes the advisory nature of the functions of the Council, for the benefit of both the Director-General and officials of other governmental organizations.

A related issue concerns the manner and degree to which the PCBS may obtain data from the public (Articles 11, 12 and 16). While a central statistical law must entail a compulsory aspect, without which it would not be able to carry out

censuses with complete coverage, the reaction to and treatment of non-cooperation must be carefully considered and suited to Palestinian realities. As the United Nations Statistical Office has pointed out in respect of the organization of national statistical services, "compulsion is important even though delinquents are rarely prosecuted".19/ Furthermore, compulsion goes hand in hand with the guarantee provided for safeguarding the confidentiality of information received from respondents,20/ something that has been recognized in the draft statistical Law (Article 13). However, the long history of mistrust between the Palestinian public and the successive statistical authorities with which it dealt calls for special guarantees and clear assurances (legal and operational) of the confidentiality of information provided to the Palestinian statistical authority.

Quoting from the PBS founding document (Appendix 10), it is difficult to foresee how the PCBS will perform its role as a "coordinating instance between the various Palestinian institutions engaged in research on the Palestinian society, both within the occupied Palestinian territory and the diaspora". It is even less certain that PCBS will be able to become "the Palestinian counterpart for foreign research on the Palestinian society within the occupied Palestinian territory". It is of course possible and even desirable that PCBS play a coordinating role among databases related to Palestine, though not necessarily among research institutions. But such a role cannot be mandatory, as suggested in the PCBS document.

In attempting to achieve its ambitious goals, PCBS has based itself on current Palestinian political and institutional realities while aspiring to raise the quality and standards of Palestinian statistics and their utilization. As PCBS is still in its important formative phase, much can be done to ensure that its eventual role conforms to the need to provide official, authoritative and accurate statistics without impairing the possibilities for a multitude of research and survey efforts on various issues within the broad domain of PCBS. Furthermore, the changing circumstances inherent in the interim phase of the Israel-Palestine accords imply a need for corresponding transitional arrangements related to statistical activities. These and other related strategy considerations are examined in Chapter III.

Chapter III
CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

The previous chapters assess Israeli, Palestinian and other major sources of socio-economic statistics on the occupied Palestinian territory. Section A of this chapter presents a synthesis of the major findings of this survey with regard to the status of data gathering and processing in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Following the sequence of the previous chapters, conclusions relative to each major statistical source are dealt with separately. Section B examines immediate prospects with emphasis on the most urgent areas for action at different levels aimed at improving the quality and scope of socio-economic statistics on the Palestinian territory.

A. Main findings

1. The Israel Central Bureau of Statistics

The Israel Central Bureau of Statistics was entrusted by the Government of Israel to extend its mandate into the territory occupied in June 1967. ICBS's first assignment in this regard was to conduct a population census in September 1967. As it was conducted in very turbulent circumstances and by an occupying power, the results of the 1967 census are characterized by numerous errors. Nevertheless, the seven publications which embodied the results of that census have remained as the reference baseline for all ICBS population estimates on the Palestinian territory.

ICBS data on the occupied Palestinian territory were procured from a number of secondary sources, especially the internal records and files of the Israeli Civil Administration. A major part of the input, however, was obtained through field work conducted by the Department of Statistics of the Civil Administration. The staff of the Department were all local Palestinians who received intensive in-service training during their work. Local staff were totally disassociated from subsequent processing operations, which were conducted by the ICBS main office in Jerusalem. These data were published in an abridged form in one chapter of the Statistical Abstract of Israel, while more detailed data were available until recently in a special periodic publication.

ICBS data on the territory is characterized by several distinctive operational advantages, emanating mostly from the fact that they were sponsored and endorsed by the ruling authority. Such advantages included easy access to institutional sources of data, steady and adequate sources of finance, and ready access to technical expertise and to elaborate facilities available at the ICBS main office. As expected, these advantages have reflected positively on such important statistical indicators as uniformity of definitions, the use of a structured coding system, and fairly regular and continuous compilation of data. These advantages have helped ICBS establish a long and fairly detailed time series on most indicators monitored, the only such comprehensive ata base for the post 1967 period. The aforesaid advantages, however, should be measured in a relative context.

ICBS output on the territory fares well when compared with some local sources of data, but it is considerably below standard when compared to the impressive ICBS output on Israel itself. As noted previously, some ICBS data were based on inaccurate definitions and imprecise categories of classifying variables. ICBS data were also characterized by frequently changing definitions of variables, discontinuity of series, and frequency of arithmetical errors, many of which remain uncorrected. In addition to such technical shortcomings it has been claimed by most Palestinian users that ICBS output on the West Bank and Gaza Strip has been subject to erroneous estimation techniques, especially in regard to such politically sensitive data as population estimates, unemployment rates, and economic growth figures.

Despite these shortcomings, ICBS publications have been extensively used during the past 25 years as the major source of data on the occupied Palestinian territory by researchers and policy-makers with diverse political affiliations. Because of the relative consistency of definitions and methods used, bias attributed to imprecise definitions of certain indicators or to disputed methods of calculation does not greatly reduce the usefulness of data as indicators of trends of change. In addition, users are confronted by the fact that other alternative sources of data are of a much more limited scope and time coverage than those of ICBS.

In general, assessment of ICBS statistical output on the Palestinian territory leads to the conclusion that some parts of this data are reliable enough to be taken as reported. Some other major types of data are of less convincing quality and they have to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, depending on the purpose for which they are to be used. Even then, ICBS data might still be used as indicators of change or as benchmark data, which could be supplemented with alternative information and analyses, if needed.

2. The West Bank Data Base Project

The West Bank Data Base Project (WBDBP) was for several years a major source for information and analyses on the economic, social and political situation in the occupied Palestinian territory. WBDBP was a private project, initiated and managed by a distinguished Israeli expert on Palestinian affairs. The project spanned a six- year period (1984-1990) before being terminated for lack of funding and other reasons.

Contrary to the expectations of its founder and sponsors, the WBDBP project did not evolve as an original data-base on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Nearly all data embodied in published reports came from official Israeli publications or sources, especially those of ICBS. However, the WBDBP publications have provided a wealth of in-depth analyses and additional information, from a vantage point which was often critical of official data sources. Coming from an Israeli source, nevertheless, the views expressed in the WBDBP reports gained much international interest and significance.

The major contribution of the WBDBP project lies in the reports written by a number of associate researchers. Some of those publications have in fact become important references on their respective areas of interest. Obviously, even these publications cannot be considered as regular databases. One of the characteristic features of the WBDBP annual reports is that data are poorly referenced. Citation in the WBDBP sectoral studies, by contrast, is more satisfactory.

3. Other Israeli sources

The Bank of Israel did not develop its reporting system on banks operating in the occupied territory. References in Bank publications to those banks remain circumscribed and highly aggregated, rendering the scope for in-depth research on this sector especially limited. Hence, its reports shed little light on the situation of banking services in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and thus make only a minor contribution to economic statistics on the Palestinian territory.

The Israel Institute for Jerusalem Studies provides some useful data and information regarding east Jerusalem, albeit from an Israeli perspective. Although the Institute's annual statistical yearbook and its other specialized publications contain useful information on east Jerusalem, the bulk of the information is in Hebrew only.

4. Palestinian non-governmental sources of data

Major efforts were made by Palestinian institutions throughout most of the occupation period to generate data that would supplement or replace Israeli

sources. These efforts were largely justified on the premise that ICBS data were inaccurate and of a limited scope. Accordingly, local statistical projects have been underpinned by the frequently reiterated position calling for generating a genuine "Palestinian number". This implicitly assumes that data coming from Palestinian sources would be more credible than those of ICBS. Local sources of data have touched on a wide range of subjects, such as human rights, health, education, social status, labour, and various economic sectors. These sources are noticeably heterogeneous in regard to their methodology, comprehensiveness, and overall reliability.

Despite the multitude of efforts in the area of data collection, no full-fledged Palestinian statistical centre had been established until the end of 1993. This is attributed in part to Israeli opposition to establishing such a facility, on account of implying a politically unacceptable manifestation of sovereignty. Nevertheless, the Israeli stand on this issue was not seriously challenged by Palestinian initiatives until late 1993, after the signing of the Israel-Palestine Declaration of Principles. Notwithstanding the prerogatives established by the Israeli authorities with regard to data collection activities in the territory, the absence of a serious Palestinian effort to establish a coordinated and systematic framework for a database and statistical activities in the territory has been a major factor contributing to the disorganized and deficient situation characterizing local data services.

There are other factors responsible for the failure to build a major Palestinian statistical agency. Until early 1994, it was not possible to secure the legislative basis necessary for the establishment and functioning of a national statistical facility. It was also difficult to ensure that various Palestinian institutions and political factions recognize one institution as being the national statistical body. Furthermore, the Palestinian institutions involved were unable to coordinate and solicit the technical expertise and the funding necessary for creating a national statistical institution.

While no full-fledged statistical facility had been established by Palestinians in the territory until 1993, many institutions have in the meantime engaged in some form of specialized data collection. The statistical projects sponsored by such institutions are mostly of an occasional nature, i.e. they are targeted at providing data on specific issues and at a certain moment in time. Consequently, none of these endeavours has come close to providing on a regular basis, a time series on the issues under investigation. In this sense, the work of these institutions resembles more ordinary research and studies than statistical surveys.

Local statistical efforts have been focused on producing estimates of a wide range of economic and/or social indicators. Their primary objective has nearly always been directed at reaching aggregate estimates or enumeration of a surveyed population in different areas or sectors in the occupied territory. They have not engaged in formulating complex databases at the level of detail or definitional accuracy as data covered in the publications of the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics. For example, very little original quantitative work has been undertaken by Palestinian institutions in relation to national accounts, external trade, agricultural output, industrial revenue, living standards, public finance and price indices. Although this deficiency arises from numerous obstacles, the most limiting factor seems to have been the absence of overall guidance or comprehensive research strategy, as well as a lack of adequate professional expertise.

In addition to substantive deficiencies, the functioning of local statistical projects has been characterized by a marked degree of duplication and competition. Against a background of pronounced competition between "development" institutions, adding data collection to any institution's proclaimed functions has been, at least, partly aimed at enhancing fund-raising credentials. In this

kind of setting, voluntary coordination and cooperation between statistical institutions is not likely to be genuine or comprehensive.

One of the important shortcomings in much local statistical work related to definitions and methodology. In general, there has been a marked degree of ambiguity in regard to methods used in sampling, tabulation procedures, and analysis of collected data. In many instances reference has been made to "unpublished" reports which are not available for verification. The ICBS data is still used in many local databases as a primary source of information. The ICBS output has been either re-published as in the original source, or used as the basis for other computations. In some cases, this secondary manipulation of ICBS data has introduced additional errors and ambiguities to an already problematic source of data. No serious effort has been made by any Palestinian source to provide a detailed evaluation of ICBS output, thus weakening the arguments which question the validity of ICBS data.

Chapter II referred to the large number of publications on statistical surveys conducted by local institutions. Notwithstanding methodological deficiencies, there appears to be an inadequate sense of purpose in many of those surveys. Nearly all sponsoring institutions rationalize their surveys on account of the significance of reliable data as a primary pre-requisite to proper planning. Yet it is hard to see what planning purposes are being served by data so collected. This has resulted in waste and redundancy in data collected by local institutions, notwithstanding the utility of some of the published references.

Several international non-governmental organizations and other donors have contributed to the excessive proliferation of statistical work, mainly by advancing funding without adequate evaluation of objectives, methodologies, and duplication prospects. Nevertheless, in light of recent developments it is likely that international NGOs and other parties may become more deeply involved in the process of data collection and monitoring in the Palestinian territory, an eventuality which highlights further the need for clear purpose and rigorous orientation of statistical activities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the future.

In view of all these attributes, it is possible to conclude that the establishment over the years of local facilities for data collection and analysis has not helped achieve major or lasting improvements in the situation of Palestinian socio-economic statistics. In some respects the situation has in fact become more difficult.

5. Official Palestinian statistical institutions

Palestine has displayed great interest in data collection and processing ever since its establishment. However, owing to the lack of effective coordination among different departments and factions, and against a background of inadequate financial and technical capacities, Palestine was not able to create until 1993 a vigorous and efficient statistical infrastructure that catered to the diverse needs of the Palestinian people.

The recent establishment of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) constitutes a breakthrough in the evolution of Palestinian statistical infrastructures. But the success of this institution will be heavily contingent on eliminating conflict or competition of local non-governmental efforts and other Palestine data-related institutions, especially the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources, in Damascus. Furthermore, the PCBS is in dire need of technical assistance and adequate financial resources, not only during the early stages of its operation but also over a long-term period in order to enable it to become as the central authority for statistical compilation, analysis and dissemination.

The PCBS has made substantial progress in the direction of creating a national statistical infrastructure and the quality of its work to date attests to high professional standards and rigorous commitment to creating a modern and efficient central statistical bureau. PCBS has achieved a number of initial goals, including the formulation of a master plan for official Palestinian statistics, a draft statistical law for the establishment of a Central Bureau of Statistics and apparent success in raising needed funding from international donors. However, it is clear that the current plans and proposed legislation are moving boldly in the direction of giving broad authorities to the proposed institution and its Director-General, which could be a source of contention among the governmental and non-governmental institutions concerned. Nevertheless, it is to be expected that PCBS will largely succeed in establishing itself as the major statistical source on Palestinian social and economic conditions, and as such it needs the support and cooperation of all concerned.

6. International institutions

The various deficiencies noted in socio-economic data relating to the Palestinian territory and people has prompted international initiatives in this field. Among the most notable examples are those activities sponsored by UNRWA, UNCTAD and the Norwegian Labour Federation (FAFO).

Data collected and published by UNRWA is exclusively focused on Palestinian refugees, and in many cases it is structured to serve UNRWA's own operational purposes. While this kind of data relates to a major segment of the Palestinian population, both in the territory and in the host countries, it is not a substitute for a pan-Palestinian statistical facility. UNCTAD data on the occupied territory cover a wide range of economic data series. This source has relied wholly on ICBS data, though the latter have been systematized and re-tabulated in UNCTAD documents for the period 1967-1987, rendering them more accessible and coherent to potential end-users.

The Norwegian Labour Federation (FAFO) conducted during the early 1990s a comprehensive survey of living conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem. The FAFO survey/project has been unique in terms of its highly professional and visible methodologies, and available technical and financial resources. Yet, by virtue of its nature, the survey is closer to being a one-time effort rather than a regular statistical source. However, the experience accumulated in the course of the survey can be of immense use in planning for the forthcoming Palestinian statistical infrastructure.

B. Areas for future action

This survey report has indicated that the situation of socio-economic data bases relating to the Palestinian territory and people is still seriously deficient, despite extensive efforts launched during the past two decades. This applies not only to statistical endeavour within the occupied territory, but also those based outside. While there is much to be accomplished in this connection, it is important to note that any development strategy has not only to be structured in the light of anticipated needs, but also should possess adequate sensitivity to over-riding political and administrative constraints.

Defining the recommended policies and measures necessary to improve the level of socio-economic statistics in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is heavily contingent on the nature of the political scenarios which may unfold in the territory. While this is true in regard to all economic and social sectors, it is certainly more so in the case of statistics. It is quite clear that both Palestinian and Israeli authorities have strong, yet sometimes conflicting interests, in regard to data collection and publication.

In so far as can be seen at present, and in the light of the framework set out by Israel-Palestine accords of 1993 and 1994, the West Bank and Gaza Strip

are likely for the coming few years to experience different political arrangements, ranging from continued occupation of some parts of the territory (e.g. east Jerusalem) to autonomous Palestinian rule in other parts, and in the longer run greater independence subject to the outcome of "final status" negotiations between the parties. The practical implications of each of these political arrangements for the structure and scope of statistical activities raise issues which are deemed vital to the success of a Palestinian national statistical strategy:

- The capability of the Palestinian Authority to promulgate and implement its own legislation, and the regulatory powers it will have in order to enforce its laws and administrative policies;
- The ability of the Palestinian Authority to formulate policies and programmes relating to socio-economic statistics, as deemed appropriate from the Palestinian viewpoint;
- Cooperation between PCBS and ICBS during the interim period;
- Recognition of the Palestinian statistical authority by those international institutions which are engaged in providing assistance to national statistical bodies (e.g. the United Nations Statistical Division, the World Demographic Council, the World Bank, the IMF and specialized agencies) and the scope for cooperation that can emerge between them; and,
- Access by the Palestinian Authority to financial resources and technical means on the scale needed to build a modern statistical facility.

The outcome of these issues will be determined to a large extent, though not completely, by the emerging political configuration of relations between the Palestinian Authority and Israel. Whatever the nature of such a political relation, it is only prudent to expect that the Palestinian strategy will push in the direction of full control over statistics-related issues and activities. Accordingly, as statistical functions are transferred to (or inherited by) PCBS, it must be prepared, along with related Palestinian institutions, to shoulder the burden of statistical compilation and dissemination.

An additional general point with a bearing on future policies and measures relates to the geographic scope of any Palestinian statistical facility(ies). In the light of many political and practical considerations, it is preferable that any plan for developing databases on Palestinian issues should be focused on an intra-regional basis, and not exclusively on Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It is natural that the starting point for a national statistical facility be anchored in the Palestinian territory itself. But such a facility should expand its mandate and area of operation to cover countries where Palestinians live as identifiable communities. In particular, this should include Jordan, Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon, Egypt and the relevant Arab States of the Persian Gulf. Certainly, this would call for cooperation arrangements with the statistical authorities of those countries, for both political and operational reasons.

In view of all the above-mentioned assumptions, a pragmatic plan for developing statistical institutions catering for Palestinian needs should incorporate a continuum of measures and policies, and not a set of unrelated grand schemes. The following concluding paragraphs suggest some guidelines and policy measures aimed at helping to establish a modern Palestinian statistical infrastructure. These recommendations are conceived to be implemented under a situation of incomplete sovereignty, though their immediate applicability may vary, depending mainly on the evolution of relations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority and on the final disposition of PCBS and its proposed statistical master plan.

1. Eliminating duplication of authority on statistics

An important prerequisite for establishing an adequate organizational framework for Palestinian statistical institutions is putting an end to the current duplication in responsibility for statistics, whereby authority has been shared by a member of the Palestine Executive Committee (overseeing CBSNR in Damascus) and the Director-General of the Palestine Department of Economic Affairs and Planning (overseeing statistical activities in the territory). Now, the new authority vested in the PCBS adds a further actor in this respect. One possible arrangement to rectify this situation is to appoint a senior Palestine official as chairman, or at least as a member, of the Board or Advisory Council of the PCBS (see below), with restricted authority established through the proposed statistical law. Such a chairman could even be a political appointee, with limited authority over the institution itself, whose effective management would remain with the Director-General.

2. Expeditious transfer of the West Bank and Gaza Strip Department of Statistics

Detailed information is not available as to the provisions regarding the transfer of the Department of Statistics to the Palestinian Authority as part of the Israel-Palestine accords on self-government in the territory. This was due to have taken place by late 1995. The Palestinian Authority has presented a strong case in support of early and full-fledged empowerment in this sector. Even so, full transfer of authority and function would take some time over the interim period.

Transferring of authority over the ex-Civil Administration Department of Statistics should be approached in a way conducive to a smooth and efficient functioning under the new regime. As such, it is imperative that the Palestinian side takes full advantage of the operational experience acquired by the local staff in the Department of Statistics. Furthermore, it is vital that Palestinian officials obtain access to all plans, maps, and relevant software pertaining to their operations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. After a short transitional period following the transfer of authority over the Department of Statistics, the local Palestinian staff of the Department could be integrated in the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. This process had reportedly begun by the end of 1994 in areas of Palestinian jurisdiction, to be extended to the rest of the territory as of 1995.

3. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)

Following the experience of most other countries, the Palestinian Authority envisages establishing a central statistical institution, which operated initially as the "Palestinian Bureau of Statistics (PBS)", and has since evolved into the "Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS)". The PCBS will be entrusted with all the functions undertaken by a national statistical institution. In keeping with international practice,21/ the PCBS should be an autonomous agency, affiliated to the head of the executive authority (the equivalent of the Prime Minister). And in order to be able to perform its functions and exercise its duties, even in a situation of incomplete sovereignty, the PCBS should be established by a decree from the Executive Committee of Palestine, as was the Palestinian National Authority. As noted above, some of the steps in the process were taken in early 1995.

The PCBS should operate on the basis of a by-law which delineates its functions and organizational structure. A draft of such a law has been prepared, as indicated. Though its final disposition has yet to be envisaged, this law should also provide clear injunctions relating to other aspects of data collection in the Palestinian territory. The final statistical, legislative and organizational schemes of the PCBS could be formulated by a subcommittee of

experts, and then reviewed and endorsed by the Palestinian Authority and the Executive Committee of Palestine.

In addition to the organizational structure already envisaged in the draft law, the PCBS could benefit from oversight by a board of directors comprising members of a high professional calibre, pan-Palestinian origin, and total professional detachment from political partisanship. Such an arrangement could be accompanied by a Board of Directors (not envisaged in the draft law) or the Advisory Council on Statistics (as specified in the draft law). Commitment to these guidelines will further strengthen PCBS credibility and recognition by all local and international institutions, and pave the way for constructive cooperation with all sides concerned. Such a Board would have greater involvement in the overall planning and operation of the PCBS than the Advisory Council stipulated in the draft statistical law, whose relation to the PCBS is limited to its role in advising the Director-General and the Prime Minister.

Bearing the previous guidelines in mind, the proposed Board could consist of members from the occupied territory and from each of the main Palestinian communities in Jordan, Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon. Coverage of other Palestinian communities at a later stage could entail co-opting additional members. Members from the occupied territory should include among them statisticians, economists, health care and educational experts.

The PCBS could solicit data from all relevant governmental and private sources. In addition, the PCBS would conduct surveys dealing with specific needs. The major publication to be released by the PCBS should be a Statistical Yearbook covering all areas. But a number of other specialized bulletins could also be published. The PCBS would also have to initiate several divisions, parallel to its areas of concern. Among the main divisions already envisaged are those dealing with population statistics, economic statistics and area statistics. In addition to those conventional divisions, the PCBS could add a division for diaspora Palestinians and a statistical training centre, as detailed below.

Technical issues relating to the functioning of the PCBS could be overseen by a committee comprising all heads of the PCBS divisions. This committee would be required to approve all plans for surveys and studies submitted by respective divisions. Such plans could also be presented to the Board of Directors in the context of the PCBS annual budget. Exact functions and lines of authority between the Board, the technical committee, the Director-General and the executive management should be clearly stipulated in the statistical law or in subsequent regulations.

4. <u>The Division of Diaspora Palestinians</u>

One of the unconventional divisions for consideration as part of the structure of PCBS is that relating to Palestinians in the diaspora. The PCBS should assume, as soon as possible, the responsibility for collecting detailed data on all major agglomerations of diaspora Palestinians, especially in relation to their numbers and demographic characteristics, education, and economic and living conditions. The responsibility for diaspora data collection can be conveniently entrusted to the competent staff of what is now called the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources in Damascus. For logistical reasons, the proposed Diaspora Division could be based in Amman, with a branch office in Syrian Arab Republic and another in Lebanon.

Procuring data on Palestinians in the diaspora requires effective co-ordination with central statistical bureaus in host countries. These institutions are expected to cooperate in incorporating specific questions relevant to resident Palestinian refugees. Furthermore, host countries could cooperate with the PCBS in conducting surveys and studies specific to Palestinian communities.

5. Statistical Training Centre

Another particularly important division to be included in the organizational structure of PCBS is that dealing with training needs of staff. Such a function has been included as one of the responsibilities of the Bureau specified under Article 3 of the draft law. It is recommended that this assignment be delegated to a specialized centre to be affiliated to the PCBS. Training in this case will be more efficient than alternative or in-house means, and at the same time it will respond to extensive and evolving needs of the PCBS, and those public and private institutions which have a strong involvement in data collection and processing.

Training needs in the early stages of authority transfer are of a unique nature, as they bear heavily on kinds of skills which for many years have been provided by Israeli technicians. Palestinians are, therefore, well-advised to seek the assistance of the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, to the extent needed, in training on technical skills of a centralized nature (eg. sampling, mapping, data processing, and formulation of the final output). Trainees should be recruited from among the present local Palestinian staff of ICBS, as well as from the newly established PCBS.

6. Policies towards existing databases

One of the most sensitive issues which needs to be addressed is how to deal with the multitude of data-related institutions which have flourished during the occupation period. The new Palestinian authority may take a stand ranging from permitting uncontrolled functioning of NGO data bases, to requiring them to procure permits for each of their projects. Given the mixed track record of many NGO data bases, it is possible that more drastic positions (such as incorporating them into the PCBS) would appeal to some.

Any efforts to subject existing databases to direct government control are likely to be faced with opposition from most NGO institutions concerned. In addition to protecting a wide range of vested interests, such an attitude can be strongly defended on account of the extensive experience gained by some of these institutions.

The Palestinian Authority may wish to adopt an "inclusive" policy towards non-governmental databases. The PCBS should make special efforts in order to develop the capacities of viable existing institutions. Institutions should be assessed according to national needs and the quality of their output, and not their political identity. Selected institutions could then be identified as partners in specific projects. This will bestow benefits such as encouraging local institutions to work with the PCBS and expand their experience, while also helping to rationalize the use of scarce human and financial resources and effectively dealing with the enormous work load.

An inclusive approach will make it possible for the PCBS to work from within the system and develop a much better chance of coordinating efforts in the research field in order to avoid duplication. In this case, the PCBS could also play a critical role in developing the skills of those institutions as well as learning from them.

A further crucial role for the PCBS is to standardize definitions and concepts. This need has been recognized in Article 4.3 of the draft law. This has been a major problem so far. Unemployment is a typical example which often produces wildly varying interpretations. The PCBS will have a number of options as to how it approaches this problem. It can either establish its own definitions and publicize them for adoption, or it can work with local institutions in order to develop such concepts jointly. Cooperation with local institutions will provide an essential framework through which to achieve standardized concepts.

In addition, this will also enable the PCBS to apply internationally recognized standards in the gathering and analysing of statistics and in encouraging their adoption by local institutions.

Fostering the cooperation of local and foreign data-related institutions requires a firm but positive policy by the Palestinian government. One of the key components of this policy is the promulgation of clear guidelines which draw a distinction between permissible research-related data collection and non-permissible national surveys. Furthermore, the success of the PCBS plans to consolidate data collection in the territory will hinge on its eventual track record in regard to two key parameters, namely its technical credibility and its ability to insulate itself from Palestinian factional politics. The evolution of the (non-governmental) Palestinian Bureau of Statistics (PBS) into a full-fledged (official) Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) is of course welcome and should be encouraged. But every effort should be made to ensure that the organizational structure of the Bureau is fully institutionalized (see sections 3-5 above).

7. Other primary sources of statistical output

In addition to the PCBS, and the ultimate status of the statistical law, some other public agencies may be expected to collect and publish detailed data relating to their areas of specialization. This applies, in particular, to the Ministries of Agriculture, Education, Finance, Health, Industry, Labour and Trade, the Central Bank and the Department of Cooperatives. Their statistical activities would necessarily need to be well coordinated with the PCBS.

8. Planning for a population census

Conducting a general population census in the Palestinian territory is one of the highest statistical priorities which should be considered, even without waiting for further major transformations in the political situation. The draft law on statistics has recognized this urgent need, though a date and modalities for its implementation have yet to be defined. The need for accurate, up-to-date and comprehensive data on the Palestinian population cannot be over-emphasized, notwithstanding other pressing statistical needs in the key economic and social spheres. Being a time-consuming project, the planning for a population census and the eventual establishment of a population register, as envisaged, should proceed immediately. Technical and financial assistance should be sought for this purpose from appropriate international bodies.

The actual implementation of the census should be attempted as soon as possible thereafter, though for practical reasons this may not be possible for at least a year after a decision is taken to proceed on this project. The importance of this project is such that it should be considered in depth at the highest levels of the Palestinian leadership, to be followed by intensive contacts with international parties concerned. The management of the census project should be entrusted to the PCBS, which in turn will have to set up a special task force for this purpose. As noted, the PCBS has already included this project in its Master Plan as a matter of highest priority.

9. Initiating an unemployment monitoring unit

A vital indicator on economic activity and living conditions in the Palestinian territory is that relating to the level and conditions of unemployment. It is here that the divergence between ICBS estimates and those of other sources - Palestinian or non-Palestinian - is very difficult to reconcile. As noted, some surveys have been conducted during the past two decades for the purpose of measuring unemployment in the occupied territory. However, since nearly all of these efforts have been of limited scope and time frame, hence they have not helped to construct consistent time series, which is deemed essential

for this kind of study. Furthermore, the definitions used in such surveys have not always conformed with recognized international standards, and the methodologies used are not always adequately exposed.

It is recommended that an appropriate mechanism for measuring employment rates be established as soon as possible, with the necessary technical assistance from ILO. The project could be sponsored by the PCBS, in collaboration with other appropriate institutions, including research centres and trade union organizations. There is no apparent need to make the implementation of this project, which is of primary social and economic importance, contingent on additional progress in the political situation.

10. Advisory technical assistance

A vital pre-requisite to the success of the PCBS is providing it with high-level technical assistance, especially during the early stages after its inception. This should take a multitude of forms including advisory services, training, workshops and provision of hardware support. The close involvement of the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSTAT), as well as other concerned organizations, such as IMF, the World Bank, UNESCWA, ILO, and other specialized organizations, is vital to help in guiding Palestinian statistical activities and facilities through their formative years. International technical assistance should aim, inter alia, at:

- Assisting the PCBS in formulating proposals aimed at the gradual re-structuring of statistical infrastructure in Palestine;
- Identifying training needs and organizing appropriate workshops and courses needed for this purpose;
- Helping formulate proposals for statistical studies and surveys to be submitted to appropriate sources of funding; and,
- Assisting in establishing the requisite systems and procedures for modern statistical services, according to international criteria and standards.

Preliminary efforts in early 1994 succeeded in bringing together the PBS (i.e. the precursor to PCBS) and a number of international organizations under the sponsorship of UNSTAT and UNDP, to discuss the preparation of a master plan for strengthening and developing the PBS. In this context, UNSTAT prepared a first draft of the proposed specification for such a master plan which was subsequently submitted for consultation with PBS and other parties concerned.22/ This draft provides a useful and far-reaching outline for the planning and implementation of statistical projects by PBS, staged carefully over the short, medium and long terms. PCBS has since proceeded to finalize a Master Plan for Official Palestine Statistics which has been adopted by the Palestinian Authority.23/ Further collaboration between the competent United Nations agencies and the PCBS should help to establish a feasible framework for coordinated international assistance in the development of Palestinian social and economic statistics.

Notes

1/ A copy of this rare report and several issues of the Statistical Abstract of Palestine are available in some local libraries in the West Bank such as that of Bir-Zeit University.

2/ United Nations, The origins and evolution of the Palestine problem, 1917-1988, (United Nations, N.Y., 1990).

3/ A rare copy of the Atlas is available at the Centre for Palestine Research and Studies in Nablus.

4/ See, eg. "Population and demographic developments in the West Bank and Gaza Strip until 1990" (UNCTAD/ECDC/SEU/1), Chapters I and II; and Palestinian Bureau of Statistics "Demography of the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip", (Ramallah, December 1994).

5/ See the introductory notes in Israel CBS, Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1988-1991 issues, for more details and Joshua Angrist, "Wages and employment in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip: 1981-1990", (Jerusalem, Hebrew University, 1992), pp. 3, 4.

6/ This section also draws on the findings of an unpublished report prepared by an UNCTAD consultant in 1990 regarding Israeli statistics on the occupied Palestinian territory.

7/ UN Statistical Office, A system of national accounts and supporting tables, studies and methods, series F. No. 2, Rev. 3, New York, 1968.

8/ Arie Bregman, Economic growth in the administered areas (Jerusalem, Bank of Israel, 1974), p. 103.

9/ Israel, CBS, Statistical Abstract of Israel (SAI), 1984, No. 35, p. 120.

10/ Israel, CBS, Judea, Samaria, and Gaza Area Statistics (JSGAS), 1985, vol. XV, No. 2, p.82.

11/ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, "Report on the consultative mission to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and Natural Resources, Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, 27/9 - 6/10 1993, prepared by Abdullah Najjar, Regional Advisor for Data Treatment" (ESCWA/STAT/1993/19, 21 October 1993), (in Arabic).

12/ Ibid.

13/ Consultant report to UNDP, (Jerusalem, 1992, unpublished).

14/ See "Prospects for sustained development of the Palestinian economy: a quantitative framework" (UNCTAD/ECDC/SEU/6) and its "Technical Supplement" (UNCTAD/ECDC/SEU/6/Add.1).

15/ UNCTAD, "Selected national accounts series of the occupied Palestinian territory (West Bank and Gaza Strip, 1968-1987", (UNCTAD/RDP/SEU/6) and "Selected statistical series on the balance of payments, foreign trade, population, labour force and employment of the occupied Palestinian territory (West Bank and Gaza Strip), 1968-1987" (UNCTAD/DSD/SEU/1).

16/ Palestine Bureau of Statistics, Small area population in the West bank and Gaza Strip; Demography of the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, (PBS, Ramallah, 1994); Economic statistics in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, (PBS, Ramallah, 1995).

17/ Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, Developing Palestine official statistics: proposal for a master plan for Palestine official statistics to be adopted by the Palestinian National Authority, (PBS, Ramallah, West Bank, 1994).

18/ Ibid.

19/ United Nations Statistical Office, The organization of national statistical services: a review of major issues, (N.Y., 1977), Studies in methods, series F, No. 21 (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/21), para 13.

20/ Ibid.

21/ See United Nations Statistical Office: "The organization..." (ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/21), op.cit.; and, Handbook of statistical organization: Volume 1, a study on the organization of national statistical services and related management issues, (N.Y., 1980), Studies in methods, Series F, No. 28 (ST/ESA/STAT, SER.F/28).

22/ United Nations Statistical Division, "First draft of proposed specifications for the preparation of a master plan for strengthening and development of the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics" (New York, February 1994).

23/ As noted in Chapter II.

Appendix 1

The Statistical Abstract of Palestine, 1937-1938

Contents and statistical tables

Chapter	Title	No.of tables
1	Climate and meteorology	4
2	Area and population	16
3	Vital statistics	16
4	Migration and naturalization	10
5	Agriculture, livestock & fisheries	13
6	Construction	3
7	Foreign trade	18
8	Transportation and communication	22
9	Labour disputes	9
10	Prices	10
11	Finance	6
12	Currency and banking	9
13	Companies and cooperative societies	7
14	Educational institutions	10
15	Judicial statistics	9
16	Hospitals and dispensaries	10
17	Miscellaneous	10
18	Census of Jewish industry & handicraft	8

Appendix 2

The Jordanian Statistical Yearbook, 1966

Contents and statistical tables

1. Population distribution as at the end of the year.
2. Registered births and deaths.
3. Comprehensive data on the various levels of the educational system, including UNRWA schools. All information is presented in national aggregates. Data on individual districts is available in the annual report of the Ministry of Education.
4. Annual rainfall at six West Bank stations (Jenin, Tulkarem, Nablus, Jericho, Jerusalem, Hebron).
5. Average, maximum, and minimum temperature in Jerusalem.
6. Temperature, humidity, and rainfall in Jerusalem and Jericho, by weeks and months.
7. Area of cultivated land and state domain by districts (as ascertained in the 1953 Census of Agriculture).
8. Aggregate data on area and output of all major fruit-tree, grains and vegetable crops. Distribution of agricultural data by district is available in the annual report of the Ministry of Agriculture.
9. Agricultural loans granted and number of borrowers, by source.
10. Number of olive oil presses, by type.
11. Revenue and expenditure of municipalities during previous fiscal year.
12. Annual averages of fortnightly prices of commodities, in Jerusalem and Nablus.
13. Monthly production of the Vegetable Oil Company in Nablus.
14. Fuel consumption, by type of fuel and district.
15. Motor car accidents, by districts.

Appendix 3

The West Bank and Gaza Strip chapter in the Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1990

Contents and statistical tables

Contents	No. of tables
Population and vital statistics	5
National income and expenditure	5
Balance of payments	1
Foreign trade	1
Prices	1
Food consumption	1
Housing conditions, facilities, & equipment	3
Labour and wages	12
Agriculture	4
Industry	3
Building	4
Roads	2
Hotels	1
Transport	2
Local authorities	2
Public order	1
Education	3
Health services	1

Appendix 4

Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies
Statistical Yearbook of Jerusalem

Contents

Chapter	Title
1	Area
2	Climate
3	Population
4	Vital statistics
5	Migration and immigration
6	Standard of living and welfare
7	Labour
8	Industry and craft
9	Infrastructure and services
10	Construction
11	Transport and communication
12	Tourism
13	Education
14	Culture, sport and recreation
15	Health
16	Public order
17	Religious services
18	Elections to Knesset

Appendix 5

Palestinian Statistical Abstract, 1984

Contents and statistical tables

Chapter	Title	No.of tables
1	Geographical and physical features	8
2	Palestinians in the West Bank	30
3	Palestinians in the Gaza Strip	23
4	Palestinians in pre-1967 occupied Palestine	23
5	Palestinian Arabs in Jordan	14
6	= = in Syria	69
7	= = in Lebanon	11
8	= = in Kuwait	13
9	= = in Iraq	16
10	= = in Libya	3
11	= = in Egypt	8
12	= = in Saudi Arabia	17
13	= = in United Arab Emirates	11
14	= = in Qatar	11
15	= = in Bahrain	4
16	= = in Oman	1
17	= = Rest of Arab countries	1
18	= = in USA	1
19	UNRWA statistics	17

Appendix 6

NGO databases in the occupied Palestinian territory (late 1991)

No.	Name of base	Location
1	Health Planning and Research Centre	Jerusalem
2	Ma'an Development Centre	Jerusalem
3	Medical Relief Union	Jerusalem
4	Economic Development Group	Jerusalem
5	United Agricultural Company	Jerusalem
6	Arab Thought Forum	Jerusalem
7	Arab Studies Society (ASS)-Statistics Dept.	Jerusalem
8	- Land Studies Centre	Jerusalem
9	- Palestine Human Rights Centre	Jerusalem
10	- Geography Centre	Jerusalem
11	Association of Engineers	Jerusalem
12	Palestine Human Rights Centre	Jerusalem
13	Technical and Development Company	Jerusalem
14	Applied Research Institute	Jerusalem
15	Joint Data Base Project	Jerusalem
16	Bir Zeit Studies and Documentation Centre	Bir-Zeit
17	Bir-Zeit Illiteracy Centre	Bir-Zeit
18	Palestinian Union Rehabilitation Centre	Ramallah
19	Labour Studies Centre	Ramallah
20	Law in the Service of Man (Al-Haq)	Ramallah
21	In'ash Al-Usrah Society	Ramallah
22	ASIR	Ramallah
23	Chamber of Commerce	Hebron
24	Council of Agricultural Services	Hebron
25	Graduate Union Research Centre	Hebron
26	Hebron Univ. Research Centre	Hebron
27	Rural Research Centre (An-Najah Univ.)	Nablus
28	Union of Agricultural Cooperatives	Nablus
29	Citrus Producers Union	Gaza
30	Industrial Union	Gaza

Appendix 7

The FAFO report: Palestinian society: a survey of living conditions

Contents and statistical tables

Chapter	Title and Author	No.of tables
1	The transformation of Palestinian society: Fragmentation and occupation (Salim Tamari)	1
2	Population characteristics and trends (H. Abu Libdeh, G. Ovensen, H. Brunborg)	21
3	Housing (Marianne Heiberg)	14
4	Health (R. Giacaman, C. Stoltenberg, L. Weiseth)	18
5	Education (Marianne Heiberg)	23
6	Household income and wealth (Geir Ovensen)	20
7	Employment and under-utilization of labour (Geir Ovensen)	32
8	Aspects of social stratification (O. Ugland, S. Tamari)	5
9	Opinions and attitudes (Marianne Heiberg)	20
10	Women in Palestinian society (Rema Hammami)	27
Additional tables in the Appendix:		
	Population and households	10
	Household income and wealth	14
	Labour force	29

Appendix 3

(Reproduced from original publication)

Palestinian Bureau of Statistics

GENERAL STATISTICS LAW

Draft Legislation

October 1994

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Law is to create a system of official statistics on demographic, social, economic and environmental concerns as an instrument for formulating public policies.

ARTICLE ONE

Name and Effective Date of this Law:

1. This Law shall be called the "General Statistics Law for 1994" and shall become effective as of the date of its promulgation in the Official Gazette.

2. The Palestinian Bureau of Statistics that was established by a decision of the PLO on March 13, 1993, will, by this Law, evolve into a Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, with responsibility to develop and maintain the Palestinian statistical system according to the regulations in this Law.

ARTICLE TWO

Definitions:

These terms, wherever they occur in this Law, shall refer to the following, unless otherwise specified:

Bureau:	The Central Bureau of Statistics.
Director General:	Director General of the Central Bureau of Statistics.
Employee:	Employee at the Bureau.
Council:	Advisory Council on Statistics.
Designated Employee:	Any person designated by the Bureau to carry out work under this Law or its rules.
Public Organizations:	Local authorities, municipal authorities, and all organizations of

the public sector and the various governmental agencies.

Respondents: Persons asked to answer inquiries for statistical purposes, or economic actors required to do so by law.

ARTICLE THREE

Functions of the Bureau:

1. To establish a comprehensive and unified statistical system to serve Palestinian authorities as an instrument of guidance for diagnosing problems and evaluating progress made.

2. To provide truthful and impartial official statistics on demographic, social, economic and environmental states and trends to serve the Palestinian citizenry.

3. To enlighten the public with information provided through the mass media, and cooperate with university and other research organizations.

4. To serve the instrumental needs of businesses and their organizations for statistical information on states and trends.

5. To conduct a population and housing census every ten years or less in accordance with the rules of a special census act issued by the Council of Ministers.

6. To participate in the international cooperation and exchange of official statistics in accordance with international standards which guarantee Palestinian membership in international organizations.

7. To compile essential statistics published on Palestine and the Palestinians by any country or international organization and analyze such statistics.

8. To establish statistical training centers in order to prepare qualified personnel to carry out the statistical activities conducted by governmental or non-governmental departments or agencies.

9. To create and maintain a library of Palestinian and international statistics, and an archive of Palestinian censuses and surveys covering the areas listed.

ARTICLE FOUR

Coverage of Official Statistics:

1. The Bureau shall collect, store, analyze and disseminate statistical information in the following fields:

   A. Population size and structure and its changes by:
      1. Births
      2. Deaths
      3. Migration
      4. Household and family formation and dissolution

   B. Social affairs, including:
      1. Labor force and working conditions
      2. Household income, expenditure and consumption
      3. Education and access to schooling
      4. Health and access to medical care
      5. Family and conditions of vulnerable groups
      6. Housing and amenities
      7. Culture and recreation
      8. Victimization by accidents and crimes
      9. Elections

   C. The national economy within the framework of national accounts, including:

1. National accounts
2. Balance of payments and foreign trade
3. Government finance
4. Prices
5. Production of goods
6. Service sector production

D. Area and other statistics:
1. Land and land use
2. Agriculture, forestry and fishing
3. Buildings by use
4. Transport
5. Energy
6. Environment

2. The Bureau can collect statistics on any other area as decided by the Council of Ministers at the recommendation of the Director General.

3. Internationally agreed recommendations on concepts, definitions, standards, nomenclature and classifications adapted to Palestinian conditions and needs shall be implemented in Palestinian official statistics.

ARTICLE FIVE

Director General:

1. The Director General shall be appointed by the Prime Minister from among persons with the required qualifications and experience, with the consent of the Council of Ministers.

2. As head of the Bureau, the Director General shall supervise enforcement of this Law and the relevant instructions, organize and direct the activities of the Bureau to ensure its effective performance, and issue the necessary instructions

or directives to respondents for the different data collection activities.

3. The Director General is authorized under this Law to seek international and other financing for censuses and surveys within the areas of societal concern listed in Article Four.

4. No statistics can be published as Palestine official statistics without the approval of the Director General.

ARTICLE SIX

Advisory Council on Statistics:

1. Members of the Advisory Council on Statistics shall be appointed by the Prime Minister.

2. The Council shall consist of representatives of the various government departments, higher education institutions, research centers, public organizations and specialists in the fields of statistics, economics and sociology.

3. Duties of the Council are to review the statistical programs of the Bureau, to advise the Director General on the statistical activities conducted by the Bureau, and to advise the Prime Minister on matters related to developing and improving the system of official statistics.

ARTICLE SEVEN

Bureau Employees:

1. The Bureau shall carry out its functions by means of its own employees and the other government employees designated for this purpose, in addition to other staff assigned on a temporary basis to conduct the census or any other statistical activity.

2. The Bureau's field workers shall have a legal status when carrying out their statistical work after proper training and after taking the oath before the Director General.

3. Each employee or other person required to collect data for official statistics shall be provided with an identity card bearing his photograph and signed by the Director General as a proof of his identity, and shall have the right to request data in accordance with the rules of this Law.

ARTICLE EIGHT

Statistical Activities of Ministries:

1. A statistical function shall be established in each ministry to ensure the provision of qualified analysis of statistics as one of the inputs for decisions taken by the ministry.

2. Government departments shall not conduct any statistical data collection activity without prior coordination with the Bureau.

ARTICLE NINE

The Bureau shall be the only authority empowered by Law to request data for official statistics from government departments, non-governmental agencies, public organizations and private economic actors.

ARTICLE TEN

Population and Housing Census:

1. A date for conducting the population and housing census shall be specified by a decision of the Council of Ministers after consultation with the Director General and the Advisory Council in accordance with the rules of the special census act issued by the Council of Ministers.

2. The census act shall include the census date, the issues to be studied, the target population, the obligation for all in the target population to participate, and any other issues approved by the Council of Ministers and the Director General.

ARTICLE ELEVEN

Duties of the Public:

1. All individuals requested by the Bureau to be respondents in a survey for official statistics should participate as part of their civic duties.

2. All judicial persons from organizations, societies, bodies, companies, etc., and owners of businesses, industries, public places, or their representatives in the country, requested by the Bureau to be respondents in a survey for official statistics, shall provide all the required data on the dates and in the way decided by the Bureau in accordance with the rules of this Law or any relevant regulations.

ARTICLE TWELVE

Duties of the Bureau:

1. The Bureau and its employees shall respect the right to privacy of individuals and households, including their right to refuse participation in a census even after being reminded of the objectives of the census.

2. The Bureau and its employees shall endeavor to minimize the burden on respondents by adapting questions to information available to respondents, giving clear instructions and restricting the content of questionnaires to bare essentials.

ARTICLE THIRTEEN

Confidentiality of Data:

1. All individual information and data submitted to the Bureau for statistical purposes shall be treated as confidential and shall not be divulged, in whole or in part, to any individual or to a public or private body, or used for any purpose other than for preparing statistical tables. Exception to this provision is use of the documents as evidence of violations committed against the rules of this Law or any relevant regulations.

2. The Central Bureau of Statistics shall endeavor to issue official statistical publications in aggregate tables which do not disclose individual data, in conformity with the confidentiality of statistical data.

3. Each employee shall sign an affidavit according to which he shall not divulge, disseminate, or transmit any information or data that is protected as confidential.

ARTICLE FOURTEEN

Exceptions to the Confidentiality of Data Article:

The provisions of Article 13 of this Law do not apply in the following cases:

1. If respondents have been informed in advance that the data to be collected will be used for purposes other than statistics.

2. If the information and data pertain to a government department, or have been published by any legal organ.

3. If the information and data pertain to an individual, or a group of individuals, who have agreed in writing to publish such information or data.

4. If the information or data pertain to a company, society, or organization, and the persons in charge have agreed in writing to publish such information or data.

ARTICLE FIFTEEN

No information, data, records or documents acquired under this Law may be presented or used as evidence in civil or criminal proceedings except as proof of violations committed against the rules of this Law.

ARTICLE SIXTEEN

Penalties:

1. Any employee or representative of the Bureau, or any enumeration or other census employee, who divulges any confidential statistical information or data, as stipulated in Article 13 of this Law, which becomes known to him in the conduct of his work, shall be dismissed and fined or imprisoned for up to one year, depending on the severity of his offense to a private or judicial person.

2. Any employee or representative of the Bureau who refuses or refrains from performing his duties in accordance with the rules of this Law can be dismissed by the Director General.

3. Anyone who acquires confidential statistical information or data, as stated in Article 13 of this Law, from an employee of the Bureau or its representatives, or from the records or registers, by means of fraud, threatening, deceit, or any other means, shall be fined or imprisoned for up to one year, depending on the severity of his offense.

4. Anyone who falsely impersonates the employees or representatives of the Bureau without obtaining a legal

authorization to act as such shall be fined or imprisoned for up to one year, depending on the severity of his offense.

5. Any judicial person who refrains from providing data as requested by the Bureau for official statistics, or consciously provides incorrect information or data in accordance with the rules of this Law, shall be fined if brought to court by the Bureau with sufficient evidence of his willful refusal.

ARTICLE SEVENTEEN

The Bureau shall cooperate with other Palestinian departments in building the central registers on population, establishments, land and land use that are needed for official statistics and for the equitable and cost-effective functioning of all Palestinian public and private administration.

ARTICLE EIGHTEEN

Regulations for the Enforcement of the Rules of this Law:

The Government shall, from time to time, issue any regulations necessary for enforcing the rules of this Law.

Appendix 9
A list of Palestinian Bureau of Statistics (PBS) projects
(April 1994)

1. The national plan for establishing the Central Bureau of Statistics
2. A population census project
3. National accounts department
4. Information systems
5. Transfer of data from the ICBS
6. The statistical training unit
7. The statistical law
8. Demographic survey
9. Health sample survey
10. Labour force survey
11. Fieldwork unit
12. National sampling frame
13. Population settlement survey
14. Current status reports
15. National statistical library
16. A study of needs
17. A seminar to study the national plan for establishing the central statistical bureau
18. The first Palestinian statistical conference

Appendix 10

Original text of information brochure published in 1993 by the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics (PBS)

Introduction

Upon the occupation of West Bank and Gaza Strip in June of 1967, the Israeli authorities have conducted a census (September, 1967) on Palestinians of the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT). This census data has been the main source of many statistical summaries since then. Although the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) has conducted population counts in Israel during the years of 1972, 1983, and 1994, the population of OPT is left out of these statistical activities.

Since 1967, statistical activities of ICBS, Israeli Civil Administration (ICA), Israeli Ministry of Interior (IMO), and Israeli Military Government (IMG) are all designed and implemented to serve the Israeli goals and objectives in the OPT. Palestinian scholars and planners are almost crippled in terms of availability of quantitative information on almost all fields of Palestinian activities. Planning for Palestinians using reliable data has been extremely difficult due to either absence of basic data or lack of reliability and trust in the available statistics. Even when data is available, it cannot be used for sound planning simply because it is present only in an aggregate form.

Palestinian efforts to compensate for the lack of data have concentrated on pocket studies through sample surveys. The urgency of need for statistical summaries in various fields for planning purposes has lead the PLO to issue a directive, on March 13, 1993 through the head of the Economic Department, Mr. Abu 'Ala, concerning the creation of the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

Purpose

The PBS shall be a politically independent institution responsible for the provision of high quality information about the Palestinian society for policy making, planning and evaluation purposes.

PBS functions

The functions assigned to the PBS are:

1. The PBS shall provide Palestinian authorities with high quality statistical services through expanding and improving the amount of data available on the Palestinian society.

2. The PBS shall function as a central coordinating instance between the various Palestinian institutions engaged in research on the Palestinian society, both within the OPT and the diaspora.

3. The PBS shall function as the Palestinian counterpart for foreign research on the Palestinian society within the OPT, as well as being the central instance to gather international information and research relevant for the Palestinian society.

4. The PBS shall prepare for the establishment of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics able to provide the full range of services by a CBS to an independent state.

In order to be able to fulfil these functions, the PBS will establish both a professional survey implementation capacity and gradually develop its own competence.

Goals

Through the PBS, we aim at achieving the following goals:

1. Establish a statistical centre capable of producing statistical data (using internationally accepted standards) on the national, and district levels which can be used in policy planning by the Palestinian authorities and international agencies who are active locally in providing financial support in various sectors.

2. Transfer the technology and know-how in the areas of survey sampling to local institutions.

3. Transfer the technology and know-how in the areas of building up central bureaus of statistics and operating it.

4. Build a national library in the area of survey sampling through acquiring of books, periodicals, manuals, software and hardware.

5. Strengthen quantitative research capacity through extensive training , workshops, and other means.

6. Set up standards and definitions for all variables of interest in preparation for adoption and use by local researches and institutions.

Strategy

The major strategy of the PBS consists of:

Firstly, to establish a small institution with sufficient resources and competence to undertake social and economic surveys and able to liaise between the needs of Palestinian policy makers and various research institutions.

Secondly, to explore various models for the operation of a CBS and assess the needed steps for the eventual establishment of a full CBS.

Thirdly, to expand the rule of the PBS gradually by undertaking CBS activities according to plan for establishing a CBS fully functional to serve the needs for the Palestinian society when required and decided by the Palestinian authority.

It is envisaged that the first two steps can be undertaken over a period of approximately two years. The establishment of the CBS can then be implemented over the following three years."

Activities

The short term activities of high priority will be:

- Build a network between the various Palestinian research institutions in order to both take a coordination role for better use of the total research capacity of the Palestinian society. The aim of the network is further to enhance the quality and relevance of the research undertaken by those institutions through the establishment of common methodologies (according to UN statistical recommendations) and practices so as to enable the production of compatible and complementary statistics within the OPT.

- Build on competence and capacity in designing, implementing, analyzing and publishing quantitative studies.

- Develop the overseeing authority's competence to formulate the goals of surveys and to use such data for policy making purposes, with the particular aim to service the policy formulators with needs assessment for development purposes.

- Expand and improve central data bases about the Palestinian society on high priority issues, either through own efforts or through commissioned research.

- Solicit international funding for high priority research to be undertaken in cooperation between the PBS and international research institutes.

- Assure transfer of technology, methodology and expertise to the PBS and the Palestinian research network from the international research institutions allowed to undertake studies in the OPT.

- Start the process of building a central resource library (statistical books and standard software) for its own operations and for the Palestinian academic institutions.

The PBS will solicit international funding for these activities. The PBS has also established contracts with international research institutions and central bureaus of statistics to provide assistance and guidance during the establishment period. In this vein, the PBS has signed an agreement with the Norwegian research foundation FAFO, Centre for International Studies.

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